

# Childhood Education

*The Magazine for Teachers of Young Children  
To Stimulate Thinking Rather Than Advocate Fixed Practice*  
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## Next Month—

■ What do you plan to do during your summer vacation? Take a trip, attend summer school, or stay at home? Some of the content of the May issue will be devoted to suggestions and descriptions of possible activities such as Morris Mitchell's "Serving in a Volunteer Work Camp as a Vacation" and Clara Belle Baker's "What Summer Reading Conferences are Accomplishing" and brief accounts of summer workshops and special sessions of interest to teachers of young children.

How an activity program can be carried on in a room of fifty-three children aged six to nine is described by Kathleen King; brief accounts of children's activities under the title, "What the Children are Doing," and two articles, one on "Music Reading Methods are Antiquated," by Helen L. Schwin and "The Teacher Integrates Art" by Eugene Myers complete the issue.

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*Courtesy Edna B. Rowe School, Toledo*

*From this—*



*Courtesy Iowa State Teachers College, Cedar Falls*

*To this—*

*We learn to cooperate*

## *Good Teaching Is Mental Hygiene*

**W**E ARE ENTITLED TO PLEASURE in our work, and that pleasure is possible only when we have a reasonable choice as to the nature of that work. It is vital that we should be able to function with comfort and ease and equanimity. That is why one is challenged when one is consulted by younger educators who seek enlightenment as to whether teaching as a profession ultimately saps youth and spontaneity.

Teachers, like all human beings, bring to their present practices conditionings from their past, some of which have a universal quality. What is particularly pertinent to this professional activity is (1) that it deals with the young, and (2) that the element of exchange between the teacher and the young is the acquisition of facts which we call learning.

The acquisition of facts is no longer the end itself but has become the means to an end. Formerly that end was personal; now it is both personal and social. The revolution in modern education is only partially explained by curriculum changes, only partially explained by making it more functional, but infinitely more significant because of its social significance.

The teacher's relationship with her superiors is a carryover of her early experiences as a child, with adults. Particularly does the early family picture influence her present attitudes. An early experience of fortunate, sound relationships with adults makes contemporary attitudes to adults reasonably easy. Give and take is a normal procedure. There is not engendered that type of respect which is based upon a substratum of fear in which the underlying hostility makes cooperation and free exchange tense and difficult and not easy.

**O**F COURSE THERE ARE THOSE TEACHERS who have experienced early unfortunate relationships with adults. Their daily practices have a crusading coloration, constructive, yes, but potentially bizarre. In them the seed of discontent may flower into a bitterness which affects their work and vitiates ego satisfactions for all participants.

Now that parents are increasingly active in school practices the need for techniques which will enable the teacher to work easily with them is a new art which she is hard put at times to acquire. Her own early sibling patterns, her own experiences with contemporaries will be helpful or detrimental. If her own childhood was full and rich in friendships it smooths that technique. An isolated childhood, or the lot of an only child, or early years limited in companionship requires later acquisition of new human attitudes. This may be exceedingly difficult for some, but when acquired, enriches the depth and breadth of the teaching experience.

There are some teachers who are fundamentally too insecure to grow in these techniques. They are at their best in the classroom; uncom-

fortable, inept, on the defensive and unhappy out of it. A wise administrator appreciates this and governs his assignments accordingly.

**T**HE PROTECTIVE INSTINCT IS STRONG in most of us. Young growing things easily loosen a flow of warmth and sympathy in man. Whether this be the material from which the paternal or maternal instinct comes is of scientific interest, to be sure, but it is also the core of the teaching motive. It is truly interesting to see how it reaches out to the young. There are infinite possibilities of gratification for the teacher, but paradoxically this state of student dependency often stimulates a primitive instinct in the teacher which is potentially dangerous. The student's immaturity caters to our sense of power, and it should not challenge our sense of dominance. We are all too easily tempted to gratify our egotism at the expense of growth in others. The constant check and awareness of this possibility of exploitation is part of every teacher's need. Between the potential good which the adult's vaster and wiser experience contributes and this aspect of personal satisfaction, there is a constant struggle, sometimes more intense in some than in others.

The more extensive experience of adults in terms of teaching and learning is the medium of exchange. Through this exchange and with added human values, progress in education is possible. Security in the educator makes an exchange easy and mutually possible. Insecurity in the educator leads to the egotistical use of past experience, in which the exchange becomes one of sharp practice. Naturally, the child's immaturity makes the barter onesided.

Acquiring knowledge is just another aspect of the acquisitive instinct. The implications which apply to the acquisition of things apply equally to these intangibles. Character charts the procedure and facts can be used selfishly and destructively, or generously and constructively. Experience can be shared with others or accumulated for the sheer sake of accumulation. It can implement miserliness, niggardliness, personal aggrandizement, or generosity and social sharing.

**W**HEN THE TEACHER INVITED PARENTS into the school as participants, both as adults and likewise as students, she revolutionized education. A modification of the curriculum to meet individual needs was only part of that change. This invitation to learning humanized learning; it created fresh responsibilities for education and also fresh areas of reorientation in human practices. It opened up greater areas for accomplishments and moved horizons into the distance. No longer can the educator complain of stagnation. Warmth and life have been added to the classroom through these human contacts which have vast potentialities for all concerned and have inherent in them a newer concept of education's obligation and contribution to and from society. Truly, this is a dramatic and democratic contribution.—*Edward Liss, M.D., Chairman, Mental Hygiene Committee, Progressive Education Association.*



## "Love Thy Neighbor---"

*How can we help children develop understanding and appreciation of others? Are there basic fundamentals with which to begin in both the early family and school life which can lead naturally into the broader concepts of the common good? Wherein lie the major responsibilities of parents and teachers? Miss Keliher, professor of education at New York University, answers these questions from the rich background of her study of human relationships.*

TODAY we are bound together by a common threat. What we were unable or unwilling to do several years ago in the name of positive concern for human welfare, we now are willing and eager to do in the name of defense. Defend ourselves, and through ourselves, democracy, we must. Is it possible that at the same time we may take the step toward a higher evolution in human motivation and seek our common destiny not in fear but in love?

Democracy is a great concept. It represents the highest form of the humanitarian ideal. Along with the great religions of the ages it places the dignity of the human spirit first among temporal values. The Bible says, "Love thy neighbor . . ." Our Declaration of Independence says of our inalienable rights, "Among these are Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness." The Bible says that man is "made in the image and likeness of God." Our document of freedom says, "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal . . ." Our fathers framed our national destiny in a positive conception of man

carrying on his government, politics, business and art in association with other men, with trust and confidence in their goodwill and ability to share in the making of decisions. Today we are called upon to defend this destiny. To defend it wisely and well, we must reformulate it into meanings spun from the experiences and beliefs of our times. We must endow it with our common faith.

This is a huge task. It calls for careful stock-taking in every aspect of our life as a people. It means extension of democracy into all acts of our individual and corporate lives. Poll taxes, shanty towns, malnutrition, racial and religious prejudice, inequalities in educational opportunity are symptoms of malignant growths that reduce democracy in the very proportion that they exist. We must go after these sore spots and excise them fearlessly. For a common faith in affectionate, trustful relations between men can hardly come from hungry, frustrated people.

We cannot cure all of these social ills at once. One of the most important things for teachers of children to remember in these times is that we must hold tight to a long-range program rooted in sound democratic values. While we as adults, through association with each other as faculties, in groups and in organizations, fight to rid ourselves of injustices, we as teachers must keep clearly before us our problems of helping to raise the citizens of our future democracy. And the most important task we face is that of learning to help our children to appreciate and understand each other, and the people around them. We must help them to grow into

understanding of the meaning of "all men are created equal" and "love thy neighbor as thyself."

### *How Do Understanding and Appreciation Develop?*

How do children learn to appreciate and understand human beings? It is a complicated business. Thousands of attitudes toward the many, many people who enter a child's life are involved. By direct example these people influence the child. What they talk about, the tones of voice they use, their own actions toward others, set the environment in which the child learns. If the adults upon whom children depend for affection and guidance display certain attitudes toward people, the children almost willy-nilly take on some part of those attitudes. School surveys of political beliefs show that children are likely to follow parental attitudes. More deeply and subtly, children follow parents' and teachers' racial and religious prejudices. Still more deeply they absorb something of adults' basic attitudes toward people as such—trust, affection, warmth, joy, fun, suspicion, coolness, rejection, competition. In their interrelations with the adults around them, children take on these attitudes. As Goodwin Watson said years ago, "It takes two to be stubborn."

Thus it behooves adults who are dealing with children to rid themselves of prejudice. If they cannot do this, they should work hard to rid themselves of expressions that convey the same prejudices to children. It also behooves adults to think through pretty carefully their own set of attitudes toward human beings in general. We cannot help children to grow into attitudes that we ourselves do not feel.

More important than our expressed and overt examples that we set before children are our attitudes toward them as persons. Just as we can multiply and share our loaves and fishes only if we have someone

with whom to share, so the child can appreciate and understand others only if he is understood and appreciated. He needs freedom from anxiety about his relations with those he loves in order to be able to give of himself to others. He is no different from us fundamentally in this respect. If we are clenched by fear that we will not be accepted, we turn inward, fear others, cover that dread with apparent hostility, or hide it by withdrawing still further into ourselves. Children do the same things and in the turning inward have less and less to give out, have fewer and fewer routes to joy and understanding.

So one of our great tasks is that of freeing children from anxiety about their relationships with the adults they care about. Therefore, first of all, we must let them know that we love them, believe in them, have faith in them no matter what they do. A child's deepest fear is that he may lose the love of his parents. Many of his eager and sometimes awkward efforts to please grow out of intense desire to be reassured. Teachers, often identified in some way with parents in the child's mind, are looked to for reassurance as well. The quick warm smile, the sympathetic tone, the appreciation of things done well are all part of the teacher's way of helping children to feel at home in the world.<sup>1</sup>

We can help parents to realize, too, some of the things they may do to free children from anxiety and release them to enjoy their association with other human beings. One of these is taking time to be with children—to hear about their experiences at school, to enjoy their awkward and often puzzling jokes, to read with them even when the same story has been reread a thousand times. Time is precious—"it is of the essence." Now and then we adults become selfish with our time. We miss the

<sup>1</sup> See "Therapeutic Procedures as Part of the Educative Process," by Dorothy W. Baruch. *Journal of Consulting Psychology*, Vol. 4, No. 5, pages 165-172, 1940. Evidence of ways teachers can help to give children reassurance.

chance to ease the ache of a child's loneliness by feeling that washing the dishes or getting the group through the first reader is more important.

As well as giving of our time without impatience, there is something of ourselves that we must give children. We must be the kind of people upon whom our children can feed in a spiritual sense of personality building. If we are unafraid, we somehow communicate to children that sense of inner security for which they are searching. Probably the outer sign of this is a sense of humor. A great mark of confidence is sincere laughter. We need more of it in our schools and in our homes, for it is a sign that no one person exaggerates his importance and that all enjoy each other and are a part of each other's lives.

Children sense strongly, too, the way adults feel about each other, especially their father and mother. They like to feel that their parents love each other and enjoy their home together. Friction between parents invariably produces some degree of anxiety, perhaps more so though not always, than open quarreling before the child. I suspect that they sense friction in the school as well. A cross word now and then is natural. Children have to learn that we human beings have our moments of being cross but that we get over them. But we hurt them when we subject them to witness nagging, vindictive behavior and basic discourtesies. I have seen older adolescents in a frenzy over the meanness between their parents. It doesn't hurt adults, either, to try some plain old-fashioned courtesy to each other, whether in the presence of children or not. This is as true of administrators and supervisors in their dealings with teachers as it is of the relationships between parents. It is sometimes difficult for a teacher to maintain a deep sense of dignity and confidence with children if she does not receive it from those who have authority over her.

Brothers and sisters are important as sources of appreciation for others or, sad to say, of anxiety. The way a new baby is introduced in the family will have much to do with the way the older child will feel toward the new family member. If parents tell him there is to be a new baby, that the baby is to be part of the whole family, and will be his as well as theirs; if the child helps prepare for the new baby's coming and after its arrival is given some simple responsibilities in helping to care for it; if attention is divided but not abruptly taken away and given entirely to the newcomer, the child will feel secure about and friendly toward the brother or sister. Any of us would feel distraught if the person we love the most were suddenly to turn full attention to someone else. The child feels the same way when all family attention suddenly goes to another child. He needs more than ever at this time companionship, attention, and friendliness from his parents.

A child's feelings about his brothers and sisters may also be tied up with a sense of rivalry. Oftentimes a parent favors one child over another and unwisely holds up a brother or sister as an example for the others to emulate. Teachers in the same way often set up competition between school classmates. Such comparisons are odious for they undermine security and cause children to feel as though they would have to strive to be someone else, which is manifestly impossible, in order to be accepted. All of us are drawn to certain children more than to others usually for unconscious reasons that go back into the days when we were learning attitudes about people. But we should be sure never to point out how bright, how neat, studious, pretty, tall or short one child is in comparison with another. (In my school days we sat according to numerical averages, the highest in the first seat of the first row, the lowest in the last seat of the last row. Few

of us liked the boy who always sat in the first seat. We were very fond of the boy in the last seat. He was never a threat to us. He liked our warm appreciation of him so much that he made it his business to keep the last seat as a prized possession!)

Closely allied to the point of avoiding rivalry is that of avoiding the perfectionist ideal. There are adults, themselves usually insecure, who cannot bear to have children make mistakes, to let them be anything less than perfect. They depend upon the child's performance to build up their own egos. Some of the most pitifully over-anxious children are those who fear what will be said by the adults they care about if they get less than perfect marks, if they spill something on clean clothes, if they fail to be at the top of any activity they attempt. These youngsters are driven by inner anxiety, not so much to be perfect, though it may look that way at times, as to be assured of the approval of parents and teachers. If this approval is withheld until "perfect" performance ensues the child may drive himself mercilessly to be something he probably cannot be, or he may find it useless and give up trying. Mistakes become like mill stones around his neck.

These are a few of the relationships with adults, especially parents, that color children's outlook on people, what they hear adults say and do; whether or not adults love them and accept them for what they are; whether or not adults care enough to give of their time and of themselves; whether or not the adults they care about respect each other; whether or not some other child replaces them in affection or edges them out in achievement and perfection. If the child finds positive answers to these elements in his life, he will almost certainly have a positive feeling toward other human beings. If not, he may be so preoccupied with his own inner world and its threats that he is truly unable to see and feel with other human beings.

### *How Can Concepts of Human Understanding Be Broadened?*

Beyond this basic life adjustment in which teachers may help all along the way by providing warmth and understanding, there are other things that broaden children's sensitivities to and concern about others. One of these is letting children grow up knowing all types of persons, children and adults. This means that in school, from the earliest days on, there should be no segregation of children for any cause whatsoever. Little children do not have prejudices. They learn them from us and from the limitations of their experience. If they grow up happily having experiences with all kinds of people the chances of their becoming intolerant are lessened. These experiences should be with persons in all fields of work, with all varieties of ability, with all kinds of cultural and racial background. As far as one school community affords such a variety, the administrative arrangements of the school should be such that all kinds of children grow up together.

Often, however, one school district does not afford variety enough to help children to know the people of our country. Then the school program should include trips, visits, invitations to people to come to the school, and many experiences in playing and working with others. The scope and extent of these experiences would depend on the age of the child. They would be more complex and more meaningful as the children grew older. But we can do much more than we have in the past in helping young children to learn of the necessity and dignity for all kinds of work in our communities and for all kinds of people. This gives children the chance to identify with people beyond their homes and intimate communities, and through identification with them grows understanding and appreciation of them.



We can do more, too, to find mutual activities among children of differing ages. Children give much to each other, and older children have much to give to and take from younger ones. We had fine results one summer in having adolescent "life-saving certificated" boys and girls teach the little ones to swim. And there are thousands of ways that older and younger can come together in a flexible and vital school program. The experience of the older, the demands for tolerance and extra understanding made of the older by the younger are grand ways of increasing appreciation of each other among children.

As children grow older they need experience not only in coming to know many other people but also in learning how to participate in the management of their own affairs. It is not enough to have passive tolerance and sympathy for others. We must know how to put these attitudes into action through democratic procedures. It is exceedingly important that we do everything we can at the present time to increase the amount of student government in our schools. Through the actual challenge of learning what policies they can affect and in learning how to administer those that are within their scope youngsters have invaluable practice in democracy itself. Student government that merely gives the youngster the right to administer punishment to each other is not adequate practice in the positive aspects of democracy. Insofar as they are capable, youngsters should be given the chance to participate in the making of the policies and rules which their student councils help to administer. They should have experience with different kinds of governmental procedures, with boards, councils, assemblies, representative congresses, and town meetings. For here in these other forms of self-government will they get practice in attitudes of

tolerance, understanding, and working together.

Our adolescent youth should have more participation than this. They should be brought directly into the community councils and should have real opportunity to have their opinions respected in community affairs. As they feel that adults have such significant respect for them as individuals they will themselves respect adults in deep and significant ways.

The most difficult thing we all have to work for in the new world we confront is the realization that the dignity of the individual cannot be assured without fundamental assurance of the dignity of the group. In this new world ahead of us we must learn to work together and insure the common good. This will mean working in unions, in organizations and in other groups of goodwill. As we thus insure the common good for all we free the individual to make his unique creative contribution to democratic life. Thus, group organization in a democracy far from that in the totalitarian order has as its major objective the liberation of individual talents and the increase of individual dignity.

By whatever combination of experience we can offer it is our obligation to give a broad range of sympathies to our children as they grow. We face a time in our nation when we must all have keener, more biting social consciences. In the past we have been all too content to keep our books of conscience on a purely personal basis. Now we must try to see that we are accountable to each other; that any act that hurts the life of any of us, injures all of us. We must search for ways to guide our acts by our positive concern for an appreciation of each other. We must put the full democratic meaning into the exhortation, "Love thy neighbor as thyself," for here lies the only way to a peaceful and a secure world.

# Measuring Democratic and Undemocratic Behavior

*If the democratic way of life is important for growth and development, could a research worker measure it? How could a kindergarten teacher who is trying to be democratic in her relations with children know whether or not she is democratic? Mr. Anderson, assistant professor of psychology at the University of Illinois, answers yes to the first question and describes a research program which has made possible the measurement of some of the psychological differences defined as democratic and undemocratic as observed in several kindergartens.*

ADULT-CHILD relations for centuries past as well as for the present have been analyzed by many persons for their mental hygiene implications. A general interpretation is that the adult-child relations in America and in continental Europe have been primarily characterized by patriarchal domination. As a result, it has frequently happened that children have not been allowed to think for themselves; that they have become emotionally dependent on their parents and on parent substitutes. Parents and teachers have in turn been afraid to put children "on their own"; afraid to let children grow up; afraid to grant them independence and responsibility for themselves.

Mental hygienists have been concerned with these relations because of certain alleged difficulties that grow out of them. Some of the problems that mental hygienists are working on are: problems of opti-

mum growth or self-realization of the individual; problems of making one's behavior satisfying to oneself as well as to others; problems of dealing with the conflict of differences; and problems of growing through confronting differences in others rather than in trying to avoid or to annihilate those differences.

In the struggle of the child to grow up, to be an individual, to have ideas and to express judgment of his own, one can see the same processes that have been expressed historically in attempts of social groups to emancipate themselves from similarly powerful tyrants.

We teach children the historical expression that "taxation without representation is tyranny". What did this statement originally mean, psychologically? It meant:

There was a conflict of differences between the judgment of the king and the judgment of the taxpayer. The use of authority, of power over another, of force or coercion is evidence of a conflict of differences.

The king feared the judgment of the taxpayer. One does not use authority, force or coercion unless he is afraid of the spontaneous behavior—the "best judgment"—of another.

The behavior of the taxpayer was determined out of the needs, desires, judgment of the king, by virtue, not of "superior" judgment, but of superior power.

There was no social participation by the taxpayer in making these important decisions.

Because the king ignored the experience and judgment of the taxpayer he failed to meet certain fundamental needs of the taxpayer.

Failure thus to meet the needs of another tended to increase the conflict, to incite resistance.

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The term "tyranny" has been used to denote a relationship in which one person happening to be in power or authority is nevertheless very rigid, unchanging, non-adjusting, non-adaptive. Any living person or biological organism so characterized is not growing. Under tyranny individual differences are discouraged; one reveals his real thoughts, real desires, only with danger to himself. In any human relationship if conflicting thoughts are concealed, it makes understanding of each other difficult if it does not actually result in deception.

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The term "democracy" has been used in contrast with tyranny or dictatorship to designate a relationship in which there is an opportunity to express oneself without fear and opportunity without danger to reveal one's thoughts and desires to others. Understanding and adjustment are possible only to the extent that differences are revealed. With increased understanding a more refined adjustment to each other is possible. A doctor makes a risky diagnosis for a deaf-mute who cannot communicate with him. A teacher makes an uncertain contribution to a child who is afraid to reveal himself to her.

### *A Specific Illustration*

Turning to adult-child relationships of a more specific nature, the following is a recorded account of what happened one time in a kindergarten. It was game time. The children were gathered around an old-fashioned circle painted on the board floor.

"Who wants to suggest a game?" the teacher asked. "All right, John, what do you suggest?" (Democratic technique. Teacher encourages social participation, self-expression.)

John: "Let's play doggie with the bone." (Social participation; child working with the teacher.)

Teacher: "We played that this morning in the gym. Let's get another suggestion. Willie." (Dictator. Decision based uniquely on teacher's judgment, teacher's desires.)

Willie: "Let's play doggie with the bone." It was not clear to the observer whether or not Willie had heard John's suggestion or the teacher's reply.

Teacher: "I just told John that we played that game this morning in the gym. Who has another suggestion? Mary."

Mary: "Let's play hide the nutmeg."

Teacher: "That's a sitting down game. We'll play that another time. We are standing now." (Dictator. Decision based on teacher's desires and judgment.)

Within hearing of the observers but out of hearing of the teacher, Ann whispered to Jane who was standing beside her, "I wish we'd play doggie and the bone." (Fear of expressing oneself in opposition to "authority". Child conceals her real wishes from the teacher. Such children become "distant" and hard to understand.)

To which Jane whispered in reply, "So do I."

"Who has another suggestion?" asked the teacher. (By this time a request for suggestions has become a mockery.) And when no further suggestions were forthcoming the teacher announced what game they would play—and they played it.

Now, no one would maintain that the fate of the nation nor the mental health of any of these children would depend on this one morning in kindergarten. It seemed, however, that if these incidents characterized the adult-child relationships from day to day that the accumulation of these experiences might be important. If one had been in the gym earlier he would have seen substantially the following activity as reported by the observers:

The game "doggie with the bone" is played by children seated in a circle. One child goes to the center, plays a sleeping dog with eyes shut and a wooden block beside him for a bone. A child in the circle gets up, quietly goes to the center, picks up the block and returns to his place in the circle hiding the "bone" behind him. The game is for the dog to be waked and told to guess who took his bone.

When the children were all ready the teacher's eyes moved slowly from child to child around the circle. Each child leaned forward as if to meet her gaze. Some became very restless

as the teacher's eyes approached them. Ann was all set to rise as the teacher looked at her, but the eyes moved on to the next girl to whom the teacher nodded. Ann saw the nod and jumped to her feet. The teacher held out her hand restraining Ann who sat down while the girl next to her went to get the bone.

A little boy in a brown suit was very eager during the whole game. But he was not called. Only three children played the game. The others were spectators on the sidelines holding themselves in. The little boy in the brown suit, however, could not hold himself in. When the circle was breaking up for the next game, he jumped up and down by himself waving his arms and legs until he was told to be quiet.

So much anticipation and so little realization! So many expressions of eager desire to do something and so many instances where the child's overtures were rebuffed. Could a research worker count these things? And if he could, what would they add up to? What difference would it make? This teacher was a very pleasant person. Everyone agreed that she was fundamentally kind to and considerate of the children. She was polite and soft-spoken. She never became angry; she seemed to have a great deal of reserve.

#### *Measuring Democratic Procedures and Behavior*

If the democratic way of life is important for growth and development, could a research worker measure it? How could a kindergarten teacher who is trying to be democratic in her relations with children know whether she is or is not democratic or to what extent she is or is not democratic? Anyone can go into some school-rooms and see autocracy and dictatorship practiced on children. And anyone can go into some other rooms—many other rooms—and see democratic techniques predominating. But could reliable measures be devised that would be sensitive enough to reveal these differences?

The research program began with an attempt to develop measures for the psychological interplay between children of preschool age in a simple, controlled, experimental play situation. A preliminary study<sup>1</sup> showed that it was possible to devise reliable measures of behavior of young children. Behavior was recorded as "contacts" and divided into two groups of categories. If a child snatched a toy, struck a playmate or commanded him, or if he attempted to force him in some way, such contacts were included under the term, "domination". By such behavior they ignored the rights of the companion; they tended to reduce the free interplay of differences and to lead toward resistance or conformity. They thus expressed a basic rigidity in responding to another.

Other contacts were recorded which tended to increase the interplay of differences. Offering a companion a choice or soliciting an expression of his desires were gestures of flexibility and adaptation. These tended in the direction of discovering common purposes among differences. Such contacts were grouped under the term "socially integrative" behavior.

Using these same methods in a more complete study<sup>2</sup> of preschool children it was found among other things that:

Domination tended to incite domination. If one child tended to use rigid, quarrelsome, commanding or coercive techniques his companion tended to respond in similar kind. The behavior was circular; like produced like. Because domination was generally a form of disapproved behavior, domination was said to constitute a "vicious circle".

Integrative behavior tended to induce integrative behavior in the companion. If a child was flexible, adaptive, non-coercive, cooperative,

<sup>1</sup> Harold H. Anderson. "An Experimental Study of Dominative and Integrative Behavior in Children of Preschool Age." *Journal of Social Psychology*, Vol. 8, 1937, Pp. 335-345.

<sup>2</sup> Harold H. Anderson. "Domination and Integration in the Social Behavior of Young Children in an Experimental Play Situation." *Genetic Psychology Monographs*, Vol. 19, 1937, Pp. 341-408.



understanding, his behavior tended to make his companion cooperative, flexible, adaptive to himself. This behavior likewise was circular; like tended to produce like. But because this behavior leads to growth and understanding, to the expression of imagination, to the emergence of originals, the creating of differences instead of the stifling of individual differences integrative behavior is said not to constitute a "vicious" but a "growth" circle.

Domination as defined and measured was psychologically different from and, in this play situation, unrelated to integrative behavior.

These three findings were further confirmed by a later study of kindergarten children in another community.<sup>3</sup>

The next problem was to determine whether reliable measures could be developed for recording quantitatively the psychological interplay between teachers and children. Preliminary work showed that the psychological relations in school were considerably more complex than in the relatively simple situation used previously with preschool and kindergarten children. The first major task was to develop reliable measures of the teachers' contacts with the children. Again this step was begun at the kindergarten level because it was felt that the relationships would be more easy to classify at this age level. It was felt important to attempt to classify and to record everything that the teacher said or did. After several months an observation blank was devised on which reliable observations were recorded. The methods and findings have been presented in a preliminary paper<sup>4</sup> and in a report.<sup>5</sup>

Three kindergarten groups in two schools taught by three teachers supplied the final data. It was found that two inde-

pendent observers recording simultaneously showed high agreement in defining a teacher's contact, in recording the total number of contacts which the teachers had with children as well as in recording contacts per five-minute observations.

In individual contacts teachers A and C each had twice as many dominative as integrative contacts and teacher B had five times as many dominative as integrative contacts. In group contacts the preponderance of dictatorship over democratic contacts was even greater, all ratios being five to one with domination the greater.

It was found that the psychological environments of individual children in the same room were vastly different. During several hours of observation some children had almost no individual contacts with the teacher; others had average frequencies as high as fifty-five contacts with the teacher per hour.

Everyone has heard the old saying: "When the cat's away the mice will play." Nearly everyone has associated children with mice and some teacher or parent with the cat. Few have reflected on the essential dictator role of the cat and of the teacher in the relationship. Nearly everyone knows schoolrooms where if the teacher is suddenly called out of the room the teacher-approved activities in that room almost as suddenly stop and "mischief is afoot." Nearly everyone knows also schoolrooms where if the teacher is suddenly called out of the room she is missed only by a few having immediate contact with her; the rest of the children are absorbed in their own affairs.

The measures that have been devised in this research program will offer no easy solution for problems of discipline, mental hygiene or democracy. But they now make possible the measurement of some of the psychological differences defined as democratic and undemocratic procedures.

<sup>3</sup>Harold H. Anderson. "Domination and Social Integration in the Behavior of Kindergarten Children in an Experimental Play Situation." *Journal of Experimental Education*, Vol. 8, 1939, Pp. 123-131.

<sup>4</sup>Harold H. Anderson. "The Measurement of Domination and of Socially Integrative Behavior in Teachers' Contacts with Children." *Child Development*, Vol. 10, 1939, Pp. 73-89.

<sup>5</sup>Harold H. Anderson. "Domination and Social Integration in the Behavior of Kindergarten Children and Teachers." *Genetic Psychology Monographs*, Vol. 21, 1939, Pp. 287-385.

# Nursery School and Social Behavior

*How does nursery school experience contribute to the social development of the child? Mr. Jersild and Mrs. Meigs, Teachers College, Columbia University, picture the growth of the child through unemotional adult guidance in school, the adjustments children make to a social group, and the development of the child's own potentialities rather than the implanting of new forms of social response.*

ONE REASON for sending a child to nursery school, most mothers will say, is to give him the companionship of children of his own age. Educators likewise have claimed that preschool experience may be valuable in promoting a child's social development. Is this claim simply an adult notion or is it borne out in the actual behavior of children?

In theory, at least, the nursery school should provide quite a stimulus to social learnings. It differs from the home environment in many ways. At home the environment is planned to suit people of a wide age range, while at school most of the equipment and activities are designed specifically for children. There is a difference also in child-adult relationships. The teacher endeavors to distribute her attentions impartially among many children. Her relations with the child are presumably free from domestic worries and pre-occupations which ramify a parent's relations with the child at home. However much the teacher may try to participate in the emo-

tional lives of her pupils, her relations with them, at least at the start, are not bound by the same habits and the complex feelings and past associations that have accumulated in the relations between the child and parent at home. By reason of this the teacher can view the child with more detachment and in a larger perspective. She does not have to regard his achievements with the same degree of personal pride or his failures with the same degree of self-reproach as may be the case with the child's mother.

As time passes, to be sure, a teacher's emotions may become highly involved in her relations with individual pupils. If she is a good teacher she will function to some extent as the child's mother, and embrace him in her affections. However, even if she is disposed to carry her maternal interests farther than is wise, the very fact that there are many children and few adults will help to maintain a difference. This difference helps to provide the child with an opportunity for meeting the world on his own merits, to find his place as one of many, and to acquire a certain amount of independence and detachment.

Dissimilarities between the home and school environment will, of course, operate quite differently in the case of different children. The behavior of a teacher who is similarly friendly to all her pupils may be warm and inviting in comparison with conditions at home in the case of one child, and rather distant in the case of another. One child may leave a rival at home, and in the absence of this rival find a new

orientation for his behavior. Another may be a small fry who has always played with older neighboring children. To hold his own he has become a doughty little fighter. At school he finds many children smaller than he. This is something new. What will happen is hard to foretell but, in one case at least, such a child almost miraculously shifted from the role of a warrior to that of a good Samaritan. One child may be the oldest as compared with a baby sibling, but finds himself in the role of a baby at school as the youngest member of the group. Another, who is subject to rigid parental discipline, may find that the nursery school is a strange and, for a time, a disquieting place, by virtue of the greater degree of freedom it affords.

#### *The Initial Period of Adjustment to the Nursery School*

Some children slide quite easily into the nursery school groove, but others require a longer period of adjustment. The varieties of responses of the newcomers are as numerous as the newcomers themselves. The changes that take place over a period of days or weeks represent one of the most fascinating manifestations of children's capacities for learning and adjustment.

The hesitancy of newcomers is reflected in one study<sup>1</sup> which compared the social contacts made by children who were "new" to the nursery school with those of children of similar age who had attended the previous year. During the first few weeks "new" children entered into only about half as many contacts as did "old" children. After an average of about three weeks, however, the new and the old were nearly equal and by the end of the year the averages were almost identical.

Perhaps the most striking evidence of adjustment to the new world appears in evi-

dences of uneasiness or fear. In one group of forty children there were twenty youngsters who at first showed postural tensions such as hunched shoulders, tense methods of locomotion and the like.<sup>2</sup> By the second week such tensions were shown by only twelve, and by the fourth week by only four children. Tics, in the forms of grimaces, nail biting, twitching, handling various parts of the body, and so forth, were exhibited by thirty-one in the first week, by fifteen in the second week, and by only three in the fourth week. Anxious expressions likewise dropped from 27 to 3; "dreamy watching" from 23 to 3. Calling for mother and asking to go home also dropped sharply.

Such changes are commonplace to persons who have worked in nursery schools, yet they are very arresting. Just what it means for later development to have conquered apprehensions connected with a venture into this new world we cannot, of course, fully appraise. But taken simply at its face value, such a shift from anxiety to relative calm in a new situation represents a notable triumph for the child. We cannot be certain that he will not later show lack of confidence, nor that his adjustment to this particular situation will transfer to other areas of life, but the adjustment he has made still is a great achievement as far as it goes.

Occasionally there are children who are so overwhelmed by their first experience in a nursery school that it takes weeks or months before they are at ease, and a few children react so violently that they are withdrawn before they have made much progress. As is well known, most nursery schools make an effort to help the child through this initial stage. In recent years it seems that more use has been made of the

<sup>1</sup> Jersild, A. T. and Fite, M. D. *The Influence of Nursery School Experience on Children's Social Adjustments*. Child Development Monographs. New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1939. No. 25, 112 pp.

<sup>2</sup> Slater, E. H. *Types, Levels, and Irregularities of Response to a Nursery School Situation of Forty Children Observed with Special Reference to the Home Environment*. Studies from the Center for Research in Child Health and Development. School of Public Health, Harvard University, 1939. Vol. IV, 2, 148 pp.

"graded approach" procedure in initiating children to the nursery school environment. Arbitrary rules, similarly enforced for all children, to the effect that the parent should not under any circumstances remain for more than a moment have been made more flexible to suit the needs of individual children.

The following episode illustrates what may happen when a different scheme is used. A little boy of two years, during his first day in the nursery school, wept constantly and called for his daddy. A man associated with the school happened to come into the room one morning and immediately the boy ran up to him, ceased crying and contentedly grasped his hand. Although the man must have been rather a poor substitute, he still functioned for this child as a daddy and gave the youngster the security he desired. Thus secure, the youngster began to take a tentative interest in what was happening around him. The policies of the school, however, did not encourage such pampering, so the man left. Immediately the boy resumed his crying. Soon thereafter, his mother was advised to withdraw the boy from the school. Instead of having the experience of becoming adapted to this new environment the youngster went down in defeat, and his defeat was given official sanction by his elders. It is possible that the same youngster, unaided, might have made a successful adjustment if he had returned again after a year or more. Concerning this, we can only conjecture, but in the meantime he had experienced hours of grief and apprehension.

#### *Varieties of Adjustment*

Throughout the course of a child's nursery school experience, just as during the initial period of adjustment, individual differences continue to be conspicuous. The resources and the challenge they afford de-

pend not solely upon the competence of the teachers or the facilities of the playgrounds or the qualities of other pupils, but upon the characteristics of the individual child. This point has many implications, including the obvious one that what is regarded as good social adjustment cannot be determined by an arbitrary standard but must be judged in part in terms of the abilities and personality traits of the individual child.

In a group composed of little children as in a group composed of adults, the apparent role played by individual members may be quite deceptive. In the adult group we may often find an inveterate talker who always seems to occupy the center of the stage, in contrast to the quiet individual who seldom speaks. The former may be driven by a gnawing desire for attention and by feelings of insecurity and inferiority while the latter's inner poise and equanimity are exactly inverse in ratio to his loquacity. In the nursery school likewise you may find a child who is always in the midst of things, whose voice can be heard above the others and who seems to play quite a prominent role as contrasted with another relatively silent and unobtrusive member of the group. Yet here again it may be the conspicuously social creature who is tense and insecure and the inconspicuous one who inwardly is most serene. Just the reverse may also be the case, of course.

In like manner, specific forms of behavior may have quite different meanings and serve quite different functions in the case of individual children. It has been found, for example, that one child who is insecure and ill at ease may be conspicuously friendly in his dealings with other youngsters while another child who also is insecure may resort to hitting. Again such behavior as fighting may represent a temporarily wholesome manifestation in one youngster but represent only a symptom of maladjustment in another.



An unpublished study by Kathern McKinnon<sup>3</sup> in which a group of sixteen children was followed from the time when they entered nursery school at the age of about three years until they had reached the third grade, offers much material that is instructive in this connection. Among McKinnon's subjects were children with notably different interests and personalities. Some of the children showed conspicuously similar personality patterns from year to year, while some of them seemed to show changes in personality and behavior. In some instances these changes were more apparent than real. One child, for example, made a strong bid for the attention of his playmates and was rather resistant toward his teachers during the preschool years but then became very compliant and made a strong bid for the attentions of his teachers when he entered the grades. In both situations he seemed to be moved by a strong desire for recognition. He varied his techniques but in neither situation was he very successful. Some children showed what seemed to be quite a distinct change, in several instances for the better. When such changes occurred they seemed to be built upon characteristics which actually or potentially were present from the beginning. One child, for example, who happened to be quite bright, was not very warmly received by her playmates in the nursery school. A change occurred when she got into the grades where her intellectual interests, which had been exhibited at an earlier time, had more opportunity to flourish. She showed animation and an interest in group projects revolving around the work of the class, and through this she gained a high degree of popularity.

Several other children likewise made changing adjustment, not so much in terms of the standards the teachers tried to pro-

mote, but by way of an adaptation of their own style of life to the school situation.

In the same vein it may be noted that the benefits which a child derives from nursery school experience cannot be gauged simply in terms of what first strikes the eye. We may find a youngster in the spring at the end of a year in nursery school who still seems to be very backward as a social creature but whose present behavior presents a happy contrast to his behavior at the beginning of the year. Judged in terms of his own behavior before and after he has made great strides, yet when his behavior is compared solely with a group standard he may seem to have gained little or nothing.

Recognition of the child's individuality is important but it should also be noted that emphasis on the individuality of the child may go counter to common-sense and the child's welfare, just as coercive efforts to impose a given standard upon all children may be ill-advised. Even though children exhibit unique characteristics, their deviation from the norm is relative rather than absolute. The children in the study cited above had their own distinct personalities, yet they marched along with the group in substantial conformity to most of the school's requirements.

#### *Trends in Adjustment*

Although the impact of the nursery school environment will vary with different children, it is legitimate to raise the question as to what are some of the general trends shown by the majority of children during their stay in the nursery school. Numerous studies have dealt with this question, based in part upon comparisons between nursery school children and children of similar ages who did not attend. The following abridged quotation is from a summary of findings in this area:

<sup>3</sup> McKinnon, K. *Consistency and Change in Personality and Behavior Manifestations—as Observed in a Group of 16 Children During a Five Year Period*. Unpublished. New York: Teachers College, Columbia University.

Among the trends indicated more or less conclusively by studies in this area are the following: nursery-school children have shown an increase in participation in group activities and in number and variety of social contacts, and a diminution of 'onlooker' forms of behavior; they have shown an increase in social poise and spontaneity in social participation and a decrease in the tendency to show fear of other people, to shrink from notice, and to hover near adults. In several studies, it has been noted that, on the average, nursery-school children have improved in their routine habits . . . with resulting increases in freedom of action and diminished dependence upon adults. The opportunity to be with other children, to observe the example set by them, and to emulate them frequently helps, at least for a time, to stimulate improved habits in eating, self-help, and other enterprises; and through the stimulus of companionship, a child may come to change his behavior in many ways. Frequently, also, nursery-school attendance seems to help dilute tensions between a child and others in the home environment. Gains have also been noted, as one might properly expect, in skill and resourcefulness in using the play materials and equipment provided by the nursery school. . . .

It is noteworthy that the children's gains in sociability do not mean that the individual children are being submerged more and more by the group. Rather, along with an increase in sociability, it has also been found that there is an increase in the child's tendency to exercise independence, to assert himself as an individual, to stand up for his interests and his rights as he sees them. . . .

The foregoing statements are based upon general trends or averages for entire groups. Actually, many children fail to show the same trends as the average . . . But although this is recognized, the general drift of findings based upon surveys of groups . . . are still significant and have practical implications.<sup>4</sup>

Although general trends such as the foregoing can be noted, nursery school experience does not, generally speaking, alter the normal sequence of social development. It does not enable a child to "skip a grade," as it were, in his social development as compared with other children who

do not attend school but do have some contact with children near their own age. In matters such as the child's sociability, his techniques of dealing with others, his techniques for preserving his own rights against invasion by others, he may, by virtue of the opportunities for learning afforded by the nursery school environment, be somewhat more advanced than his uninitiated peer, but the nursery school environment brings out his own potentialities rather than implants new forms of social response. For example, the negativism or resistance so frequently noted as a common feature of the two-year-old's behavior toward adults may merely be extended to his peers when his social horizon is enlarged to include children his age.

### *Sequence and Change*

Similarly, as children grow older, they normally show an increase in genuine participation; they are able to play effectively in larger groups, to undertake more complex social enterprises. These trends are also observable in the behavior of children outside nursery school. It can be noted, as in the above-mentioned study of old timers and new children, that many children who enter a group as much as a year later than others of similar age speedily move forward to the same kinds of social behavior as is shown by the veterans. We have here a phenomenon analogous to that which is found in the elementary school when a child who has good mental ability, but who has not had formal arithmetic, soon "catches up" with other pupils who have had arithmetic drills for a longer period of time when they were younger and less mature.

Neither does nursery school experience forthwith endow two- or three-year-old children with social techniques normally shown by six-year-olds. Normally as children grow older there is a falling off in fracasés of certain kinds. Occasions for

<sup>4</sup> Jersild, A. T. *Child Psychology*. Revised edition. New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1940. p. 219-221.

pushing, hitting and quarreling in disputes over materials and space normally decline, especially since youngsters learn as they grow older to substitute other methods for direct attack. In one study<sup>5</sup> it was noted that during a school year the teachers in one group did more to forestall disputes and to teach children how to settle their differences in amicable ways than was the case in another group of children of about the same age. That year the children did less fighting than children of the other group. But the instruction apparently did not "take", for during the following year, in a freer kindergarten situation, the children of the former group more than doubled their conflicts, while the children in the other group, who likewise were allowed much freedom in the kindergarten, showed a slight decline. Many factors other than techniques used by the teacher entered into the situation, to be sure, but the results seemed to suggest that regardless of efforts to superimpose adult social techniques upon youngsters, children will potentially retain the forms of behavior that are characteristic of a stage of growth.

Even if the nursery school environment cannot transcend changes in behavior that come with added maturity and the accumulation of everyday experiences in the process of growing older there still, of course, is room for important operations within these limitations. The gains made by a child are relative to his stage of

growth, but none the less they may be quite important. It should also be pointed out that the growth process alone, unaided by opportunities for experience, will not bring about changes in social behavior such as the average child exhibits. For this reason, if the behavior of nursery school children were compared, not with a control group of youngsters who have had some opportunities for fraternizing with others, but with children who have few opportunities and whose contacts are limited almost exclusively to adults, the benefits derived from nursery school attendance would no doubt stand out much more sharply. Moreover, it cannot be claimed that a child's entrance into school might be delayed indefinitely on the theory that he will, by virtue of his greater degree of maturity, rapidly acquire skills and adjustments equal to those that have been gained by other children of the same age who have attended school for a long time. Certainly, on the theory that one should strike when the iron is hot, a child's opportunities for fraternizing with his peers should come when he is ready for such fraternizing, at about the age of two years, if not much earlier. It undoubtedly also is true that if a child is denied such opportunities there would come a time when it would be difficult for him, in spite of his added maturity, to cover lost ground and to catch up with other children. In individual cases one can see children who have been denied such opportunities to an extreme degree during early years of life and who seem to be handicapped in the years that follow.

<sup>5</sup> Jersild, A. T. and Markey, F. V. *Conflicts Between Preschool Children*, Child Development Monographs. New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1935, No. 21, 181 pp.

**H**IS one secret was his unconquerable interest in life. His second, was as simple. On excursions to town or merely on walks along neighboring roads, his usual companion was the little boy. He never lost touch with childhood.

It was to this, I think, that the Biblical patriarchs owed their long, sound years. In that pastoral life the family remained closely knit, no matter to what size it grew. There were always children around the elders. Children through whose eyes they might see again the wonder and beauty of the world, through whose questions they might find once more their own far childhood.—*Maurice Maeterlinck* (This Week Magazine, January 26, 1941.)

# America Is \_ \_ \_ \_

*This article by Miss Smith, a teacher of fifth grade in the Glencoe, Illinois, public schools, might be said to describe a creative writing experience, sensory experiences, social science and nature study experiences of her pupils. It does, but more than these experiences is the "feeling" these children have for what America is.*

ONE MONDAY morning our fifth grade discussed Charlie McCarthy's program. The children expressed real appreciation of Laughton's reading of *The New York Times'* editorial beginning, "What is the love of country for which our flag stands?"

The question was asked, "How would you describe your country to some one who knew nothing about it?" One child thought there would be no one who didn't know something about America.

"How about the people on Mars? They know nothing about America," asked another. So we imagined being safely rocketed to Mars and since the Martians, fortunately, could understand our language we proceeded to tell them about America. The result is given in the children's descriptions that come later in this article.

The teacher's initial idea was to encourage the writing of some descriptive sentences for practice in spelling and in writing techniques. We discussed different sections of the country—their industries and physical aspects. We talked about what one would hear, see, feel and smell in each region. The first group of sentences was very gratifying and the activity might easily have been dropped there except for the children's interest and enthusiasm.

Each morning new committees were formed and there would be much conversation about choice phrases which seemed to describe America best, such as, "Are you going to use that phrase about 'trees towering above' or may we have it?" "John wrote something about small towns and you ought to ask him for it." "May we write about churches?" "I think that sentence is more about industries than about water. Why don't you give it to the cities' committee?" "The beaver uses his tail for other things than guiding him through the water." The "author" answered, "I know it, but I'm not writing about all that he does and I think this gives the effect I want." She did not change it.

If one child wrote something others liked and in rearranging or rewriting dropped a favored phrase, he was always asked to replace it. One such phrase was "nuzzling the ground for food"; another, "workmen hurrying and plodding"; others, "the sharp wind cooling off the tall buildings with its brisk air"; "streams—peeking the woods and forests over."

When the original description of the cotton pickers was submitted, the term "darkies" had been used twice. We talked about using that term and our one colored child told what names his race like to be called. There was no further comment, but "darkies" became "workers" in the final form.

Committees changed in personnel so rapidly and there was so much exchanging of phrases, sentences, and ideas that most descriptions are representative of many children's work. However, the one on churches is almost entirely the work of



two little girls. The description of roads is very much like the original composition of one girl. A committee added the last two descriptive sentences; she liked them and kept them. The part on small towns was written by a little group that is quite immature socially and academically; it lacks the broad vocabularies of other parts.

In a few cases the teacher helped when she felt the children might not be able to contribute. Without any comment those sentences with which she helped were dropped; their reinstatement was sought by nobody. However, the boys are represented by the sentences on "steel mills with melting steel that looks like silver water," the one on harbors with their cargoes and those about cowboys and nurses.

The phrase, "America Is," was taken over by all the groups because of their pleasure in one boy's having used it. From day to day they would inquire, "May we work on 'America Is?' I have a new idea." To the teacher the most surprising thing about this whole activity was the children's enthusiasm which held until they had organized it to their satisfaction.

When we were asked to participate in the Thanksgiving program it was agreed that "America Is" could be used. Each child chose a favorite sentence to give but the group requested that all of the one on roads be given "because you can't stop in the middle of that one." Also "because it sings all the way just like the crickets it talks about."

An earlier unit of work this year had been on what the research chemists are doing in finding new by-products, especially in using waste materials. That study is reflected in the sentences about manufacturers and research workers. There are many expressions traceable to our last year's study of folk and fairy tales and to the imaginative writing we did there.

The group who wrote "America Is" was with the same teacher last year. During

that period we did a great deal with creative dramatics, much imaginative and decorative art, and many original songs. We have especially enjoyed pantomime and rhythms and have preceded a good many writing activities with bodily action. For example, if we wished to write about winds or trees, we became winds and trees. We swayed and turned and tried to make rhythmical phrases to fit our movements. If we chose witches or dragons, we acted as witches or dragons might and again sought phrases to fit our ideas.

We have listened together and tried to describe sounds. We have watched trees and clouds and told one another what we've seen. We get our best results through using our bodies first. In describing people we have found we liked best those whose new shoes were doing something, whose wrinkles made us feel a particular way, or whose hair was having something happen to it.

When the children began "America Is" the teacher suggested a frieze to picture their ideas. It was her thought that they needed some active exercise for relief from writing. The writing is finished to their satisfaction and although the frieze is well planned, it is still far from completion. It seems quite evident the children would have been quite satisfied with just the writing.

Several people have asked whether or not this group knows the works of Walt Whitman or Carl Sandburg. So far their school experiences have not included acquaintanceship with either, but they have built an appreciation for such an acquaintance. Besides the editorial mentioned above, we have enjoyed together the record, "Ballad for Americans", as sung by Paul Robeson.

Here are parts of the form and organization with which these children have been satisfied to describe America:



AMERICA IS forests waking up in the morning dew as you hear birds chirping gayly and squirrels sitting in the trees eating and chattering.

Rabbits eating sweet clover and running in and out of the bushes.

Grandfather frogs lazily sunning themselves on a round flat lily pad of a smiling pond. Thousands of mosquitoes that buzz and hum all day long.

Skunks and porcupines that waddle around with none to fear.

Shy fleet-footed deer that dart in and out of the dense forest.

Proud elderly moose that stand in the water stately and silently holding their antlers aloft.

The cunning fox that steals through the woods ready to pounce.

The thin weasel that is an enemy of most everyone, digging out woodchucks and other ground animals.

The immense silver-tipped grizzly bear with his long curved claws and tremendous strength to pull over huge boulders.

The mountain goat with his long coat and beard of white fur.

The sure-footed mountain sheep with his long curved horns.

The stubby beaver with his broad tail that guides him through the water.

The shy raccoon with his ringed tail and dark

circles around eyes on his sharp-pointed face.

Opossums sticking their heads out of the holes in their trees and playing dead if an enemy is near.

The moon sending golden streams of light through the shimmering trees.

Mother birds spreading their wings over their babies and baby fawns cuddling up against the mother or nuzzling the ground for food.

Bats fluttering about and owls hooting strange music, singing the forests to sleep.

AMERICA IS the long never-ending roads that tie town after town together.

Roads that sing along with the crickets.

Smooth roads.

Bumpy roads.

Roads that run races with the squirrels.

Roads that twist and turn like the worms.

Roads with the smell of burning leaves on their sides.

Roads that invite you to roll along with them and seem to take you across the colorful rainbow of bridges of the skies.

Roads with bridges that sway back and forth to the rhythm of the wind.

Roads alive with colored beetle-like cars crawling up the mountains and down into the valley.

AMERICA IS churches that tower above the quiet villages.

The church bells that almost drown out the buzzing of voices as they chime, "Come to church, Come to church."

Churches on the hillsides and in the valleys, too.

Churches in the great cities and in the towns.

Churches of wood, stone and brick.

Churches on the green grassy slopes with bare windows looking down upon the towns.

The dim inside of a great church and the quiet and stately solitude.

The late afternoon sun as it filters through the rich hues of the stained glass windows.

The magnificent altars with white lace spread upon them and the candles piercing into the gray darkness.

The church bells chiming in the evening  
dusk over the quiet country-side.

AMERICA IS the vast fields of golden grain  
waving while the young winds gayly play  
tag over them.

The harvest with its yellow grain, orange  
pumpkins and other autumn colors.

The men shouting while putting the fruits  
of the harvest into the wagon.

The many different colored fields of vege-  
tables that sway and bend with the wind.

Cool silver streams that go trickling through  
the farm meadows where cows sleepily  
graze in the bright golden sun.

The cows leaving the pastures for home  
where the farmer milks and where clean  
fresh milk goes into the pail with an even  
rhythm.

The hens clucking and cackling telling about  
their new eggs.

The rooster crowing telling that breakfast is  
being served in the barnyard.

The orchards and their little old bent fruit  
trees with their limbs spreading out try-  
ing to touch other trees while the wind is  
pushing and pulling them to make more  
leaves fall.

The cotton pickers swinging from side to  
side, picking the little white balls of cot-  
ton and putting them into bags.

The cotton fields gay with singing, talking  
and humming of the workers.

The cattle heading homeward after a pleas-  
ant day grazing on the wide open prairies  
and drinking from some wandering stream.

The cowboys swinging their lassos and sing-  
ing while keeping close watch over their  
herds.

Many bright valleys with horses romping  
and running around on the grass.

AMERICA IS the small towns with flowers  
that sway in the cool breeze and at dawn  
open their petals.

The colorful parks with sweet smelling pine  
trees spreading their branches over the  
waterfalls.

The children playing and the sound of balls  
flying over the tennis nets.

The shouting of children as they ride on the  
creaking swings.

Small towns where people know each other  
and are kind and helpful to one another.

Small towns with old ladies and old men  
sitting on their porches while children run  
and skip past them.

Small towns that at night become dark and  
the shadows of the trees creep from place  
to place while the moon shines down upon  
them.

AMERICA IS skyscrapers that reach to the  
clouds and can see and hear everything  
that's happening on the city streets.

Hundreds of cars buzzing along like little  
ants, rumbling on the bricks.

Stop and go lights blinking.

Cars screeching brakes and blowing horns to  
let a dog dart across the street.

People bustling about whistling and singing.

People following the sounds of church bells  
to church.

News boys calling, "Read all about it."

Policemen's whistles blowing.

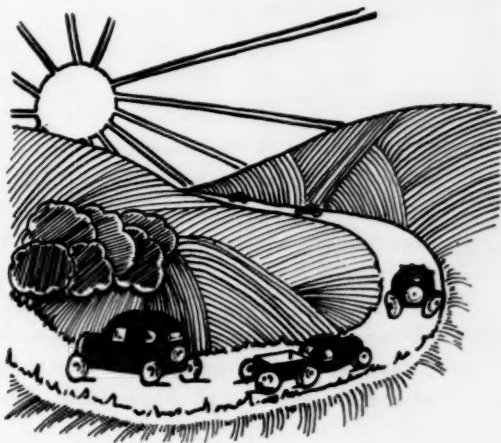
The opening and shutting of doors.

Boys and girls laughing and playing.

The pit-pat of children's and grownup's feet  
on the sidewalks.

Choking smells from the trains that bring  
officemen and workmen hurrying and plod-  
ding to their day-by-day tasks.

Slums with dark silent streets that creep  
among the shabby old houses.



Parks where busy city people enjoy the pleasures that await them.

The chirp of a friendly bird or the cracking of an old limb.

Great freight yards where engines come puffing in pulling long strings of empties and go out with their cars loaded down with goods.

Roaring machinery echoing against the walls of the great buildings while the flames shoot out of the chimney and smoky smells fill the air.

The steelmills with melting steel that looks like silver water; the machinery spitting fire as if it came out of a dragon's mouth.

The big harbor near the city with the boats coming in and out stored with many cargoes.

The sun shining through the puffs of smoke making fairy folk.

The old clock in the tower chiming midnight and all the city lights dimmed except for the moon shining its petals of light onto the tall skyscrapers.

The sharp night wind cooling off the tall buildings with its brisk air.

AMERICA IS courageous firemen with their hoses that shoot streams of water on red, orange and blue flames and save the lives of others.

Policemen with their shrill whistles guiding cars and trucks to prevent accidents.

Doctors who keep sickness away from people, treat diseases and discover new medicines to save many lives.

Nurses that help doctors, nurses that help people when they get children, nurses that help people when they are crippled.

Lawyers who know the laws and give advice about matters of law or act for another person in court.

The research chemist who weaves the dreams of men into realness, who turns the everyday products into wonders you would never think were related.

The manufacturer who has the vision to look ahead.

The manufacturer who sees the trees as paper and rayon.

The manufacturer who sees bananas as wool.

The lumberjack from the country of thickly grown trees with the smell of flapjacks floating over the woodlands and sounds of men calling, "Timber."

The miner who goes into dark coal mines deep in the earth, where the workmen's lights shine and the sound of pickaxes can be heard.

The stormbeaten fishermen that roam the oceans in their schooners looking for good hunting grounds.

The goodhearted fisherman who whiles away his time with his music.

AMERICA IS a nation that stands for life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

A nation of free people, freedom of speech, and freedom of press.

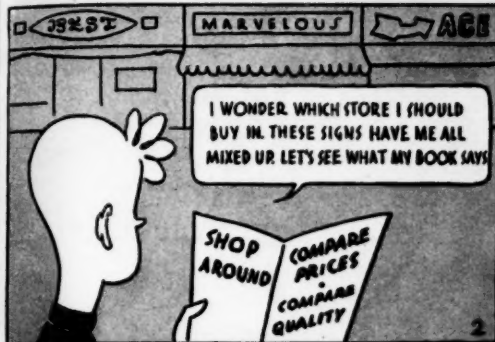
A nation that lies proudly and happily under "Old Glory," the banner that waves her stars and stripes over the land.

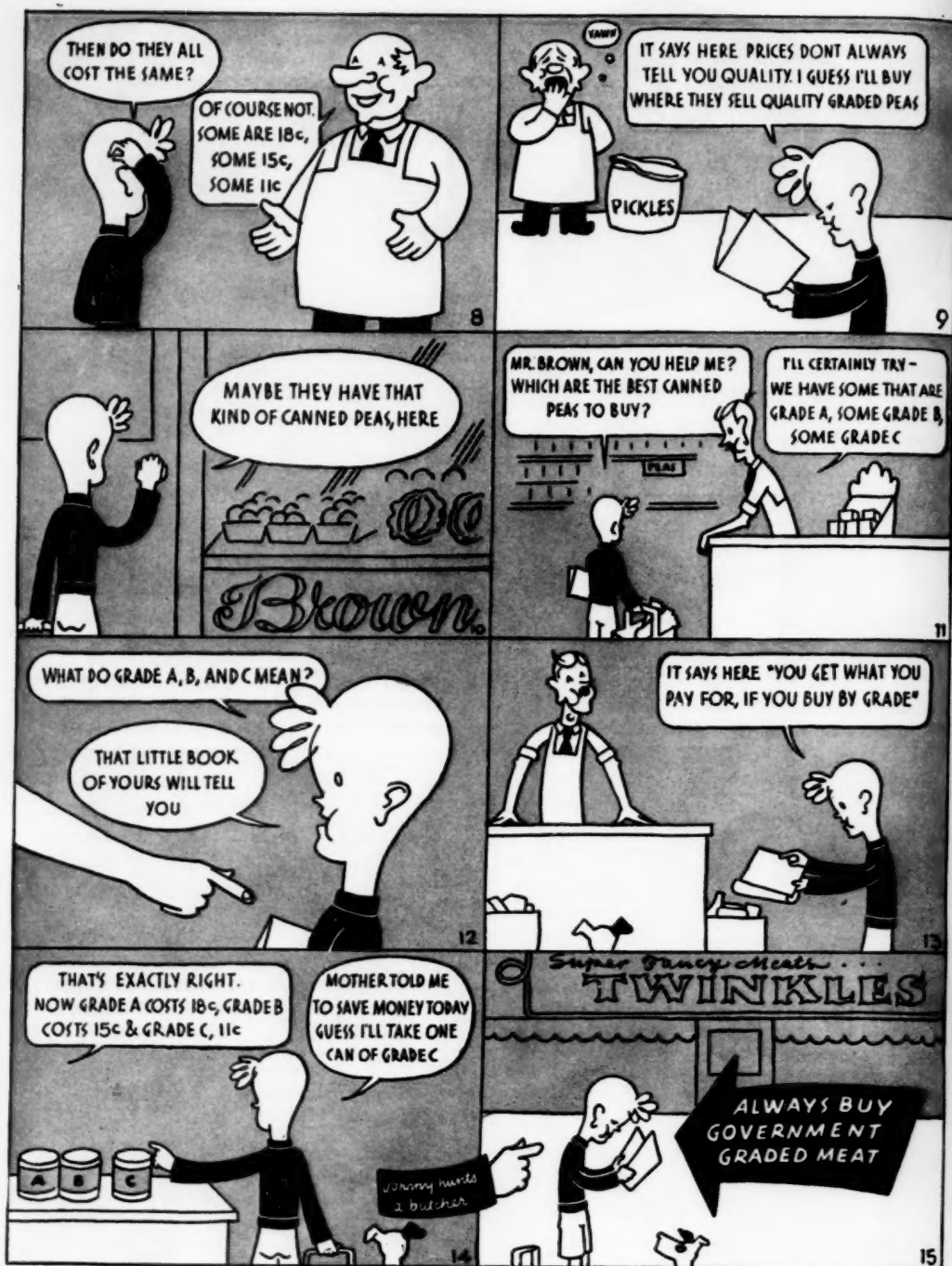


Children as consumers have received little consideration yet a surprising number of them do much of the family shopping. "The Adventures of Johnny Consumer" as cartooned on the following pages suggest many learning experiences which might well be developed in a grocery store project. We regret, however, that Johnny's mother felt that he should have a "special reward." We would like to believe that Johnny's "reward" was his satisfaction in learning to be a good shopper. These pages are reproduced from the junior issue of *Consumers' Guide* through the Consumers' Counsel Division of the Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C.

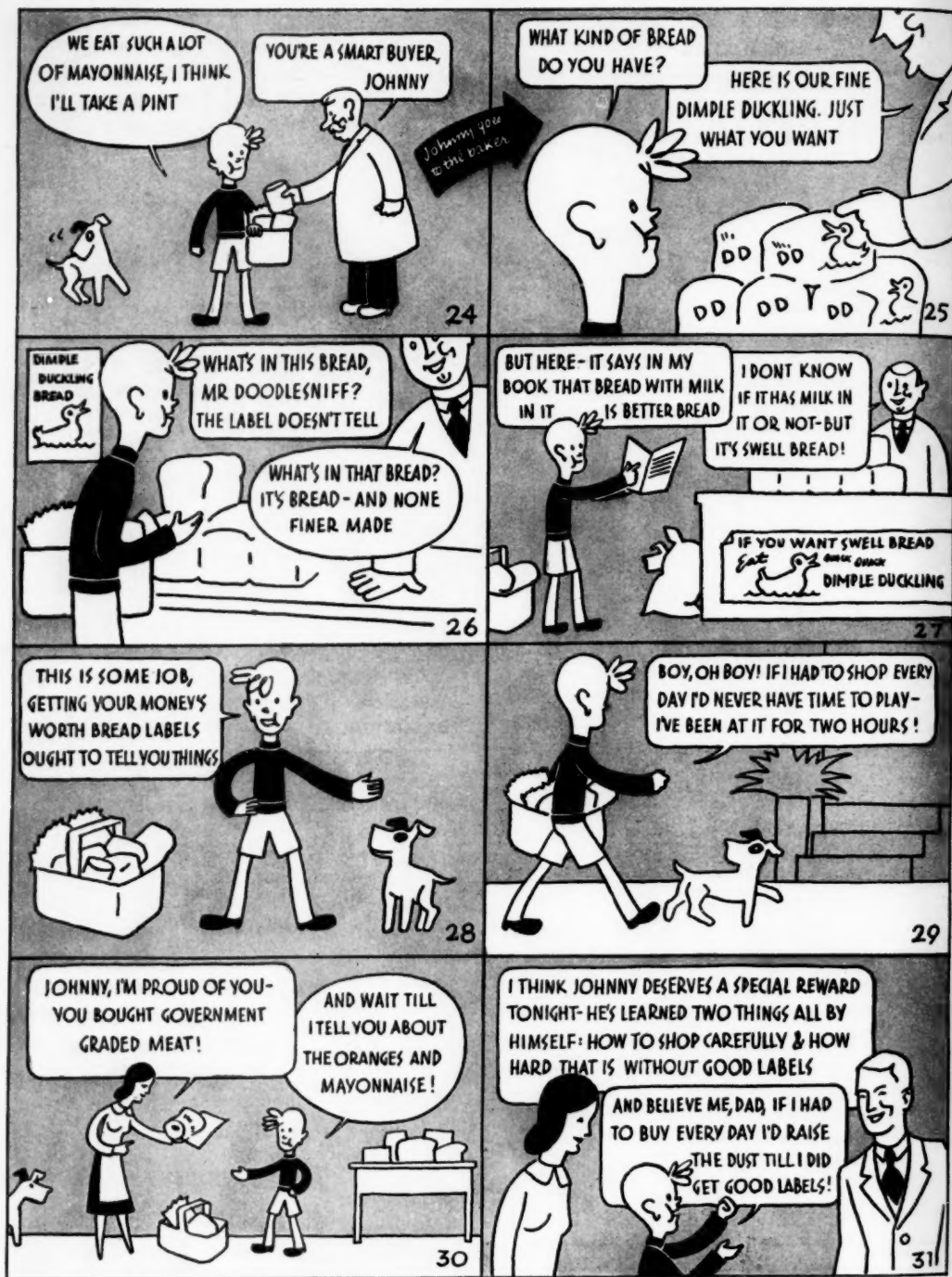


# The Adventures of Johnny Consumer











# Children and Guns

*Just how serious is the persistent gun play of America's young and what are the reasons for it? Is there a possible solution? Mr. Skipper, counsellor of student teaching at Chicago Teachers College, gives pertinent answers to these questions.*

THERE are many parents and teachers who are perplexed and dismayed by the fact that children like to play with guns. Some are vaguely annoyed by this fact; others deplore it with waving of hands. To say the least, most of us are nonplussed.

This problem is considerably more than an episode in the play habits of our children. Perhaps a consideration of it in larger context will lend perspective. Indeed the first step in the solution of any problem is its location and definition.

It has long been recognized that a considerable proportion of children's play consists in identification with and imaginative participation in adult activities. The manufacturers of children's toys have certainly realized this fact and capitalized upon it. A visit through any toy department will verify this to the casual observer.

The miniature ironing boards, brooms, carpet sweepers, stoves, cooking utensils, dishes, doll houses and the like continue to hold their own. I cannot refrain from remarking, in passing, about the *ne plus ultra* of adult simulation when little girls are provided with dolls so life-like that a change of diapers is a part of the equipment.

The automobiles, airplanes, trucks, trailers, railroad trains, battleships, tanks, submarines, pistols, revolvers, rifles, machine

guns, steam shovels, cranes, derricks, mechanical sets, chemistry sets, tool kits, uniforms and play suits provided for boys certainly are a reflection of a natural and healthy interest in the adult concerns of a technological society.

Whether it be desirable or undesirable, the fact remains that it is normal, natural and inevitable that children, living in a social order preoccupied with arms and armaments, will have some of their interests and energies canalized in these directions. Therefore, those who see something sinister in the gun play of children are viewing a symptom of a widespread social disease which is of adult origin. The danger to our children does not lie in the fact that they play with guns; this in itself is innocent. The danger lies in the educative influence of a social environment which suggests that weapons of lethal destruction are appropriate instruments for adults to employ.

It is obvious that cures are not effected by stern treatment of symptoms. Until we are prepared to deal firmly and realistically with the causes it is perhaps socially healthy that our children continue to wave guns under our noses. This may serve as a reminder of our negligence in matters of social justice.

So long as we are content to permit our children to grow up in a world in which force and violence rather than intelligence and mutual goodwill determine the outcome of events, why begrudge them their fun with guns? To be sure this is a crude form of violence and pressure but would you want them to play politician, banker or industrialist as realistically as they play soldier or G-man?

The educational task presented by this problem is not merely finding substitute outlets for youthful energy and enthusiasm and assembling concerted community pressure to discourage this type of play. The task lies in developing informed social insight, reflected in attitudes and translated into action which will change our society to a more desirable order and remove the source of social suggestion. This is no easy task and does not promise an early cure. However, deep-seated maladies do not lend themselves to easy remedies.

### *The Past Contributes to Present Attitudes*

There is another aspect of this problem with which the schools can deal more directly. This has to do with the part which our past national development plays in the shaping of present attitudes.

We are not far removed from the gun-toting days of frontier life. Then the sovereign individual was prepared to defend his right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness with his trusty six-shooter. The hardy pioneer divided his time between felling trees with his ax and shooting Indians with his long squirrel rifle. The time is not so distant when adventurous souls interrupted their labor of driving spikes in transcontinental railroads to seize rifles and slay savages who objected to encroachment upon their hunting grounds.

We are sufficiently removed from these days so the undeniable glamour and adventure overshadows the sordidness of much of it. This story is the American Illiad; it is our folklore. It is an index to much of the distinctive in American character. This legend has been memorialized in song and story. It furnishes an inexhaustible storehouse for radio and movie script. Our children see it in the movies; they hear it over the radio; they read about it in books; and study about it in history.

Is it to be wondered that they like to

shoot imaginary Indians? Is it curious that they take delight in being Robin Hoods, righting wrongs with smoking pistols? I think it is natural and, having slain countless numbers of Indians in my own childhood, I am not too much concerned about the homicidal tendencies of my son.

Since non-school agencies have and are doing a fine job in preserving the glamour of our glorious past it devolves upon the school to complete the picture. The sordidness should not go unchallenged, the contradiction between avowed ideals and actual behavior should not remain concealed.

Someone has said that upon landing the Pilgrim Fathers first fell upon their knees and then fell upon the aborigines. The tendency to treat the Indians as an inferior race has characterized our relationships with them from the beginning. The assumption that a so-called inferior race *deserves* harsh treatment, deprivation and extermination is implicit in our record and saga. When Hitler enunciates the doctrine in a different context we are aghast.

The effect upon the development of racial attitudes by permitting such complete assumptions to remain unchallenged is certainly of much more concern than the incidental play habits engendered. The character forming effect of glorified violence and callous disregard of "natural rights" for the red man is much more important than the dramatic play suggested.

The gun play of children is innocent and natural, considering the attendant circumstances. These circumstances are neither innocent nor necessary. The suspicion that gun play leads to unwholesome attitudes is a *non sequitur*. The unwholesome attitudes spring from the sources of social suggestion which lead to gun play. In the interests of mental hygiene we must concern ourselves with those sources rather than worry about an incidental symptom.

# We Write Poetry

*Mrs. Trimble's eight-year-olds try their hand at writing poetry after their experiences with prose, described in the February, 1941, issue. These eight-year-olds go to school at Evansville, Indiana, with Mrs. Trimble as their teacher.*

IT BEGAN quite by chance. Rosa, who is a solemn child, looked up from verses we were reading and said bleakly but with finality, "It beats." She wore a look of stubborn but amazed certainty.

The decks of the Pinta, the little Nina, and the good old Santa Maria were swarming with sailors who, with another great discoverer were crying, "Land, land ahead!" But so was Rosa. I shut the book.

"Listen," I answered. "It goes plop-plop, plop-plop, plop-plop. Like your jumping rope on the side-walk, or the batter that sucks and breaks from the side of mother's mixing bowl when she beats a cake." Encouraged by success, I rose to more august heights. "Or like waves of the sea."

There is a name for it,—a word as smooth as cornstarch pudding to your tongue; a word with no sharp edges, that curves and swings just like the song. We call it "rhythm".

By the end of the week, even the little tough guys who lived on the creek bank were metrical. I still contend I had but a small part in the show. Perhaps I opened the wickets of the dam.

It would not be quite honest to say that we were wholly dedicated to "Art for Art's Sake." But I have known adults who also have sought the limelight.

Malcolm became at once our most versatile and prolific writer. He handled his

own publicity, setting the tempo of appreciation. His best efforts savored of Gertrude Stein. "The ride is hide," he stated definitely. "The hide is cried." In conclusion, he called attention to a fact that in this day of unemployment, deserves attention. "Honey," he wrote, "is money. Money is sunny the end." Which is certainly true!

We did not hesitate to laugh at our own witticisms:

When mother was a little girl  
She had pigtailed  
And the boys  
Put them in ink wails.

was a sure-fire success.

Bobby's poems had a touch of fatalism:

I dreamed I was on a ship  
And it tipped  
We was wet  
But there we set.

Older heads than his have observed that "men must work and women must weep." They had nothing on Bobby:

The Indians are in their wigwams  
They do not know about money,  
They have a life  
And a knife.  
The women cried  
While the men ride.

Bobby was a mild, fat little boy who accepted life without comment. He had never before assumed that we would be interested in his ideas and it had not occurred to me that he felt a keen interest in color and sound and that he was doubtless always entertained by his own selective observations.

When he wrote stories of the gym he did not speak as did others of "summer

saws," or of "wheel barrel races." He said instead, "There are dark black curtains at the windows of our gym. And velvet curtains on the stage." And after he had the sickness our town was sharing, it was not the memory of the castor oil that lingered. He wrote, "My bed had a cover with flowers on it. The flowers are red and blue and purple." So I was not surprised when he wrote "A Rainy Day," which has, I think, a very real poetic feeling:

Something goes patter, patter  
I say what's the matter  
I think the wind sings,  
But it is the rain.  
The dogs all splash  
Thunder is crashing  
The old people slip on the side-walk  
The rain goes drip.

The daily swollen output of poems about bees can only be accounted for by the fact that trees and sees, to say nothing of breeze, are so tempting to a novice. Bobby was bitten by the same urge, but reported facts with stern accuracy. His bees did not wallow in pollen with drunken abandon. His narrative makes it plain that the Queen had made demands:

The bees  
Have a hive in the trees  
They feel a breeze  
And go buzz, buzz  
They get yellow dust  
Because they must  
To make bee bread  
The Queen Bee said.

Of course it all depends on the point-of-view. George, for instance, seems to think that bees have little to worry about. He is not afraid to say so:

The bees eat honey  
In the sunny flowers  
That's funny  
But my father has to get money for ours.

Orville was more defeated by circumstances. A timid, undernourished dreamer on relief, he called his poem, "Wishing":

Spring is really slow  
I wish the flowers would grow  
I hope the wind don't blow  
I've had enough.

At this point he came to me. "I ain't dun," he said shyly. What shall I say? I clipped the first blue squill of spring to his dirty sweater with a paper clip. "How do you feel now about winter?" I asked.

Billy, the realist, felt that spades were spades, so why talk about it! So, he wrote with a too-soft pencil:

Indians live in the woods  
When they are sleepy  
They go to their teepee  
To take a nap.

He never bothered to say more.

But not so Teddy. With no effort at all he could toss off sheets of blank verse that bristled with big words and flowed with sunsets. I put him through a third degree.

"Teddy Beagle," I demanded, "did you read that in a book?"

He had one answer. "Naw, I seen it." And I knew he spoke the truth, even though he had never traveled beyond the movies at the corner. This is one of Teddy's:

The cattle move slowly back and forth  
on the prairie.  
The sun is red when it goes over the hill  
When darkness spreads  
Cowboys ride over the plains to their  
ranch.

Blank verse became the rage. Co-operatives flourished. When "City Street" was brought to me it was signed by five creative artists who pointed out the words for which each was responsible:

Round, round, round  
Children walking all around.  
Cars are rushing to the gas stations  
Bicycles are spinning past,  
And busses, fire trucks, and motor cycles  
are ripping along the city streets.

The girls, meanwhile, remained more calm and stuck to birds in the trees and familiar seasonal songs. They wrote neat



names with capitals such as, "Pome Summer," "The Snow."

Delores June called hers "Love." She made a beautiful even margin and spoke dispassionately:

The sun is pretty  
The sun is bright  
The sun loves me  
I love its light.

Even Ellen who, working at top speed, usually finished yesterday's lessons tomorrow morning, unexpectedly to her as well as to us, broke out with four lines of verse that scanned perfectly. She was inordinately proud of it and copied it three times. Here it is:

In summer when the flowers bloom  
And grass is all around,  
The birds all sing up in the trees  
With such a pretty sound.

There were several poems faintly suggestive of Robert Louis Stevenson. One was called "The Wind":

The wind is blowing very hard  
It sweeps the leaves across the yard.  
The wind is blowing very wild  
It blows the hair of every child.  
The wind is blowing very cold  
I shiver because my coat is old.

Its author was one of those children who never made mistakes. She even skipped lines and put in apostrophes. And she looked down her nose at those of us whose ideas flowed less freely. We were the also rans.

Peggy Lou got there first. She chewed her pencil with anxious thought and produced "The Snow":

The snow is white  
The snow is pretty.

*We shall not dispose of our enemies by shooting them, but only by understanding who they are, how they got to be what they are, and how they must be got rid of by a concerted effort of informed intelligence to build a better life.—*  
Harry A. Overstreet in "New York State Education".

It is chilly and cold  
The snow is pretty.  
The snow falls soft  
The snow falls pretty.  
The snow lays still in our big city.

By that time Helen was ready with "The Storm" which started in like Beethoven's Fifth and ended on a spent pessitone born of W.P.A.

When it is raining  
And the lightning is flashing  
When the wind is roaring  
And the thunder is crashing  
Then we are sure  
That we'll have a storm.  
It will probably do a great deal of harm.

Marcia frankly agreed:

The clouds were black  
They looked like coal  
They covered me  
Just like a bowl.  
It rained all day  
The lightning flared  
Then everyone,  
And I, was scared.

After a few days the rainy season had spent its force and Jo Ann had written:

When it rains and thunders  
I put my head under the covers.  
And when it is done  
The rain goes drip, drip  
It does not matter with me.  
I was not scared when it was over.

The next morning when I worked at my desk, I felt a warm presence and as a matter of course, without looking up, I reached for a poem. But it was only Rosa, the discoverer. She had forgotten about Poetry. "If you ain't got a permanint, how did them gullies git in your hair?" she whispered bleakly.

# Teachers as Readers

YOU HAVE in your classroom children who represent European and Asiatic cultures. Have you ever considered the contributions made to the civilization of America by different racial groups? Have you ever thought of how your understanding and recognition of these can enliven your work in the classroom and rejuvenate your attitudes?

Books which have been written by so-called native Americans and by foreign-born Americans can give you an insight into the problems the pioneers faced and into the difficulties surrounding the present generation. But living with and really trying to understand the hopes, problems and achievements of the groups you serve will broaden your appreciation of each child in

your classroom; will make your teaching more vital and effective and will ease the pressure upon many children who try to reconcile the daily aspects of American life with their ideals. You are the interpreter to the community of these vital forces in American life. Have you used your privileges to the fullest extent?

While we cannot list all the material upon this subject, we are presenting for your consideration a few current books and periodicals which may be of value to you in this field. We would appreciate hearing any comments you may make on these suggested readings. While realizing that thinking may be *modified* by reading, we recognize that *true* understanding results from the application of reading to life.

## Books

**OUR RACIAL AND NATIONAL MINORITIES.** By Francis Brown and Joseph Roncek. New York: Prentice Hall, 1937. There have been many contributors to this book. Each writer has emphasized the problems and hopes of his national or racial group.

**FROM MANY LANDS.** By Louis Adamic. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1940. This book contains family stories of various racial groups beautifully and understandingly written.

**PARIS GAZETTE.** By Lion Feuchtwanger. New York: Viking Press, 1940. This book gives a picture of the dissolution of family life when external pressure creates intense internal disturbance. Helps one to understand the difficulties of the refugee.

**AMERICAN TRANSITION.** By Theodore C. Blegen. Northfield, Minnesota: Norwegian-American Historical Association, 1940. A picture of the background of the Norwegian settlers, the problems they brought with them to America and those they have encountered and mastered here.

**A GOLDEN TREASURY OF JEWISH LITERATURE.** By Leo W. Schwarz. New York: Farrar and Rinehart, Inc., 1937. Excellent excerpts of literary contributions by Jews and about Jews.

**PORTRAIT OF MEXICO.** By Diego Rivera and Bertram O. Wolfe. New York: Covici Friede, 1937. Beautiful copies of Rivera's paintings of Mexican life; a pictorial appreciation of Mexico.

**THE DANUBE.** By Emil Lengyel. New York: Random House, 1939. A picture of the Balkan countries as they were and a background for understanding the present situation. Excellent reading.

## Magazines

**Common Ground.** A quarterly magazine published by the Common Council for American Unity, 222 Fourth Avenue, New York City. Contains excellent material on the foreign born, their place in and contribution to American life, as well as information on the status of the alien.

**Survey Graphic.** A monthly magazine of social interpretation published by Survey Associates, Inc., 112 East 19th Street, New York City.

**Scholastic.** An American high school weekly published by Scholastic Corporation, New York. See volume 37, No. 13, December 9, 1940, "Pan American Issue." Contains fine bibliography on South American countries. Also an article by Harry Banta Murkland on "The Books Our Neighbors Write."

## A. C. E. Convention News

WESTWARD HO to Oakland July 8-12 for what promises to be a real A. C. E. Travelling University. More than one hundred forty people from all parts of the country have been invited to participate in the study classes and at least another one hundred will participate in other parts of the program. A sizable university staff!

The plan for study class procedure is that during the first hour foundation material will be presented by one or more specialists in a particular field. During the second hour the class leader, assisted by persons qualified to speak for different levels, will develop, through discussion, practical implications for the education of children. Class members will be encouraged to participate. The levels to be represented by assistants are: nursery school, kindergarten, primary, middle school, administrator, teacher preparation, student, and parent. Each study class will have an interpreter who will record discussions and prepare them for publication. The twelve study classes and some of their personnel are listed below:

### Convention Theme: CHILDREN, TEACHERS AND TODAY'S CRUCIAL PROBLEMS

#### Class I. Cultural Relations Within Our Own Country. Leader: John A. Hockett.

How may we, as individuals of different races, nations, and creeds learn to live together in a truly democratic way, with mutual respect and understanding and friendliness?

#### Class II. Cultural Relations Within the Americas.

Leader: Helen Blackburn. Specialists: Frances Norene Ahl and Irene Wright.

What must we know as teachers and what experiences may we give our children in order to aid in the building of desirable coordination among the peoples of the two continents?

#### Class III. Relation of Youth Problems to Early Childhood Education. Leader: Helen Heffernan.

What failures in our past educational program for young children can be identified through a study of the difficulties of present-day youth and how may we avoid making these same mistakes with the children of today?

#### Class IV. Relationships Between Citizen Groups and the Schools. Leader: Winifred E. Bain.

How may we as teachers join with other members of a community to arrive at an intelligent understanding of the function of our schools and to establish a basis of mutual respect and faith that will lead to successful cooperation?

#### Class V. Finances and an Adequate Elementary School Program. Leader: Mary Dabney Davis. Specialist: Worcester Warren.

How may funds necessary for a modern elementary school program be maintained in the face of the present-day demands of groups sponsoring special defense activities for young people and adults?

#### Class VI. Welfare of Migratory, Relief, and Low Income Groups. Leader: Isabel Robinson. Specialists: Newton Edwards and Mary B. Perry.

What conditions are responsible for these groups; how can we of the school adjust our educational programs to meet the needs of the children of these groups; and what responsibilities have we in assisting other community agencies in caring for their social and physical well-being?

#### Class VII. Mental Health of Children and Adults.

Leaders: Mr. and Mrs. Harold H. Anderson.

What is involved in developing and maintaining the mental and emotional stability essential to sane, constructive living in this complex world which makes many demands on time, energy, feelings and understandings?

#### Class VIII. Religion as an Important Resource in the Lives of Children and Adults. Leader: Edna Dean Baker.

How may the school, the home, and religious institutions work harmoniously and effectively in establishing values, attitudes, and patterns of living inherent in a truly satisfying life? When and how shall this guidance be undertaken with children?

#### Class IX. The Arts as Stabilizing Factors in the Lives of Children and Adults.

What experiences in art and music can we, as teachers, have and share with children which will cultivate self-expression, broaden understandings, develop appreciations, and give release from emotional strains under which children as well as adults are living?

#### Class X. Language and Literature as Avenues of Understanding and Relaxation. Leader: Julia Hahn. Specialists: Dorothy W. Baruch and Annie E. Moore.

How can we open to ourselves and to children the avenue of creative expression through language and reveal new worlds to children through books—both experiences leading to enriched living and clearer understanding of other places and peoples?

#### Class XI. Recreation as an Essential to Wholesome Living. Leader: Julia Wade Abbot.

What is recreation; how can it be justified for children and adults both in and out of school; and how may it be made an integral part of daily living?

#### Class XII. Democratic Living in our Classrooms as an Influence in the Development of Children and Adults. Specialists: Paul Hanna and E. T. McSwain.

What opportunities are there for genuine cooperation in planning for and carrying on one's own education; and how may individual interests and abilities be used so that they contribute to group and community welfare?

Preliminary programs may be obtained from Headquarters Office, 1201 Sixteenth Street, Northwest, Washington, D. C. Plans for the studio groups and other program details will be announced in the May issue.

# Book . . .

## REVIEWS

Editor, ALICE TEMPLE

### HOW TO INCREASE READING ABILITY.

By Albert J. Harris. New York: Longmans, Green and Company, 1940. Pp. 403. \$3.00.

During recent years there has been such an influx of books and articles on remedial reading that we wonder whether there is danger of this emphasis on remedial measures outweighing the importance of good developmental plans in the teaching of reading. *How to Increase Reading Ability* is not just another book on remedial reading. The book's subtitle, "A Guide to Diagnostic and Remedial Methods," names the book well for its arrangement makes it easy to use for reference. Its format is good and its style is simple and clear. Tables and illustrations are comprehensive and are used effectively. The case studies used are well selected and are not too exceptional in character to be useful to the teacher.

Five chapters of the book include a review of how the usual child learns to read, the meaning of reading readiness, how it is measured, and how pupils may be classified on the basis of it. There is the usual survey of various systems of teaching reading, and the information on what to look for in children's oral and silent reading, and how to test.

The remaining chapters are concerned with the problem of remedial reading. Mr. Harris reminds us of the good slogan for better teaching, "teach, test, reteach," and states that when children are scheduled for remedial work the slogan would read, "test, teach, re-test." There would be some disagreement, however, among teachers with Mr. Harris's belief that "there is a good deal of truth in the statement, 'It has been said that remedial teaching is nothing but good, effective teaching.'" In the appendices appear a descriptive listing of tests, and a long list of supplementary reading for children "made up primarily with the needs of remedial teachers in mind," but it is very suggestive for use with normal readers.

For the teacher in training the book, which is highly condensed, includes the essentials of the reading program, and if used in combination with guided observation of classroom work,

and with supplementary reading would be a helpful text.

For the teacher in the classroom *How to Increase Reading Ability* would be a good book to use in evaluating her work, in helping her to maintain a balance in the child's reading program, in being aware of causes of reading disabilities, in knowing where to turn for more help than the book affords and how to use such help effectively.—*Marjorie Hardy, Principal Lower School, Germantown Friends School, Philadelphia.*

### PROGRESS IN READING SERIES. By Ernest Horn and Others. Boston: Ginn and Company, 1940.

Designed to develop consistently basic reading skills throughout the elementary school, this series of readers should accomplish its purpose. Beginning with its attractive pre-primer and reading on through the sixth grade text, one finds interesting, challenging content, carefully graded for each level. The gradual growth in vocabulary and reading matter during the primary period should prove a valuable basis for the materials in the upper elementary texts. The books for the upper grades contain material to develop the skills, habits, and attitudes necessary for good work and recreational reading.

There are stories of a literary nature as well as many that correlate with the social and natural sciences. Through interesting stories and exercises the authors show the child how to read Roman numerals and graphs, how to behave in certain social situations involving morals and ethics, and what to do in case of accidents.

The illustrations are large, clear and command the interest of the reader. They vary from bright colors to those in black and brown or black and white.

Different artists as well as authors have contributed to making this a very attractive, interesting and worthwhile series of readers which should build up the reading habits and skills which too often in our schools are given only lip service.—*Mary A. Cameron, Principal of Rozelle and Mayfair Schools, East Cleveland.*



**EVALUATING THE WORK OF THE SCHOOL.** *Compiled and edited by William C. Reavis. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1941. Pp. 236. \$2.00.*

For several years the Department of Education of the University of Chicago has held during its summer quarter a conference for administrative officers of public and private schools. *Evaluating the Work of the School* is the report of the ninth of these conferences.

Evaluation was discussed from five different standpoints: The Nature and Purposes of Systematic Evaluations, The Evaluation of Instructional Services, The Evaluation of Administrative and Supervisory Services, The Evaluation of the Socializing Functions of the Modern School, and Formulating a Comprehensive Program of Evaluation for a School Year. Each of the three papers presented at a given session dealt with a particular phase of the main topic. In every case the speaker was chosen because of his special fitness to deal with the topic assigned him. Round table discussions which occupied fully one half the time of the conference proved to be a highly valuable part of the whole program.

An appendix of the report includes a bibliography and an outline for a self survey of a school system. While this conference was planned primarily for administrators and supervisors, many classroom teachers will find much of interest and value to them in this complete report.—A. T.

**FARM WORKERS. LIBRARY WORKERS.**

*By Franz Hess, Marion Le Bron and Rudolf Modley. Editor, Alice V. Keliber. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1940. Pp. 56 each. \$.80 each.*

*Farm Workers* and *Library Workers* are two of Group II of the "Picture Fact Books." Each is an interesting, accurate and comprehensive account of the subject with which it deals.

On the opening page of *Farm Workers* we find this timely statement: "The American farmer is often called the backbone of the American people . . . Today the American farmer might be called the backbone of American defense . . . Only when people have enough to eat can we hope for real and lasting peace in the world, security for our country, and defense of the American way of life."

The young readers of this book will learn, among other things, of some twelve different kinds of one-crop farming and of the typical

activities engaged in by the workers on these farms. There is pictured for him also the variety of work which must be done by the single farmer and his family who raise several different products. Numerous photographs and drawings clarify the text and add greatly to the interest of the book. On one page, for example, are twelve sketches showing the chief work of a Kansas wheat farmer during each of the twelve months of the year. On another page is depicted in similar fashion the activities of a farmer's wife and daughter in the course of a single day.

*Library Workers* is an equally informative book. It tells, for example, the story of libraries, past and present; pictures a modern public library and its services to children and adults alike. The book bus and pack horse librarian are described as they distribute books in rural communities. One chapter is entitled "Behind the Scenes in a Large Library" and another "Becoming a Librarian." Photographs illuminate the text throughout.

Both these books may well be added to every elementary school library, not only for the benefit of children of third and fourth grades, but for teachers of younger children who may need some of the "facts" found in them.—A. T.

**SINGING ROUND THE YEAR.** *By Agnes Wright. Illustrations by Edna Potter. New York: A. S. Barnes and Company, 1940. Pp. 52. \$2.00.*

As the title suggests this new book, *Singing Round the Year*, is a collection of forty-eight songs for the calendar year. There are four songs for each month. Many of the songs are seasonal. Others are about interests and experiences of children, holidays and special days which we celebrate. The first song is an attractive New Year's song. There are songs for Valentine's Day, May Day, The Fourth of July, Hallowe'en, Thanksgiving and Christmas; there are songs about Circus Day, Playing Indian, and The Hand-Organ Man. Generally speaking, the range of the songs is wisely confined to the notes within the staff. The intervals are easy to sing and the words usually sing along with the music in correct form. Most of the songs are easy for adults to play and easy for children to sing.

The illustrations are very attractive making of this volume a delightful picture book as well as a collection of songs. Parents and teachers of young children will find in *Singing Round the Year* many worth-while songs.—Jessie Carter, Elementary School, University of Chicago.

# Books...

## FOR CHILDREN

Editor, MAY HILL ARBUTHNOT

**BLUE WILLOW.** By Doris Gates. New York: Viking Press, 1940. Pp. 172. \$2.00.

**CHILDREN OF THE HARVEST.** By Gertrude Chandler Warner. New York: Friendship Press, 1940. Pp. 95. Cloth \$1.00. Paper 50 cents.

**ACROSS THE FRUITED PLAIN.** By Florence Cranell Means. New York: Friendship Press, 1940. Pp. 113. Cloth \$1.00. Paper 50 cents.

Here, surprisingly enough, are three little "grapes of wrath" for children from 8 or 9, to 12 years old. The two from the Friendship Press are probably intended for Sunday School consumption and they frankly encourage church maintenance of "centers" for the children of migrant workers. In spite of this propaganda, they are both good stories and so is *Blue Willow*, which is burdened by no such ulterior motive. Yet the motive is there, just the same, and the three little books are as much alike as the proverbial peas in a pod.

In each one, the migratory family is a superior one, reduced temporarily to this way of living. In each one, the children encounter all kinds of other children and make friends. Then, things get worse and worse. *Blue Willow* has a villainous overseer, and the other two books use the illness of the mother or grandmother to bring the family to the depths of despair. Then each one ends with permanent work for the father; a house and stability for the family; school and friends for the child.

Must our children turn sociologists too? If so, here are three attractive books, with courage and humor to balance the despair.

### Early Days in America

**ALONG THE ERIE TOWPATH.** By Enid La Monte Meadowcroft. Illustrated by Ninon MacKnight. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1940. Pp. 227. \$2.00.

Boys and girls 10 to 14, will find Mrs. Meadowcroft's latest story full of well-drawn characters, thrilling episodes and authentic historical details. It begins in the year 1823 in Albany when everyone is excited over the build-

ing of the Erie Canal. The oldest boy in "Aunt Polly's" big family is already at work digging the canal and presently young Davy, unable to settle down to peddling his mother's pies and enduring the stern discipline of school, runs away from home and begins a new life on the canal boats.

He thinks he can earn more money for his mother that way and he does, but he endures a sterner discipline than school and learns at last that he must go back to his lessons after all.

There are many characters in this book and perhaps a few too many episodes. It makes an unduly, large canvas. However, people and background, customs and action are so well told that the reader who can swing it gets a remarkably rich impression of a period, of a lovable group of people and of that unfailingly fascinating development, the Erie Canal.

**BLUEBERRY CORNERS.** By Lois Lenski. New York: Frederick A. Stokes and Company, 1940. Pp. 209. \$2.00.

Even though Lois Lenski's last books have been for older children, we know by her inimitable illustrations for that precious nursery classic, *Susie Mariar*, that she understands younger children too; also her earlier books were all in that field. Now *Blueberry Corners* will please children 8 to 12 and it is quite the most successful book Miss Lenski has done.

This author-illustrator has been carrying on a meticulous research into the ways and customs of old New England and using the fruits of her research in her stories. Here we have rural Connecticut in the 1840's by way of Parson Griswold's family; eight children in general and two in particular. Becky and Fanny are the lively heroines of the story and the family. Poverty, courage and love for each other make the background. The episodes are simple, everyday happenings but the significance of a dull, gray dress when you yearn for a red one, of a boiled dinner instead of turkey on Thanksgiving, of seeing the circus parade but not the circus, and still having fun and keeping your chin up, these make up the tale. "How Christ-

mas Came to Blueberry Corners," and "The Wedding," the closing chapter, provide a shining conclusion.

Miss Lenski still turns her minor characters into types. Her villains have to repent and confess their sins, but her children are lively, heart-warming characters, individualized and convincing.

**THE FAIR AMERICAN.** By Elizabeth Coatsworth. Illustrated by Helen Sewell. New York: Macmillan Company, 1940. Pp. 132. \$2.00.

This unusual story opens with a thrilling episode from the French Revolution. The little boy, Pierre, is the sole survivor of an aristocratic family and the mob is searching for him. Jean, a faithful servant, helps the child to escape. They reach Brest at last, and there Pierre is engaged as a cabin boy on an American ship. The captain promises Jean that he will deliver Pierre to his uncle and aunt in Boston.

For the French child there is sadness in leaving Jean and his country but there is unspeakable relief in the peace and security of the American-bound ship. Moreover, he finds on board friendly adults and two children of his own age, Andrew and Sally (*Away Goes Sally*). Just as Pierre is beginning to feel safe, danger again threatens him. A French officer comes on board for war-time inspection. Only Sally's charm and quick wit save Pierre from capture.

This is an important story, told with breath-taking suspense. There is a curious shift of emphasis from Pierre to Sally that is not altogether pleasing but it ties the book into the Sally series, *Away Goes Sally* and *Five Bushel Farm*. The theme is a great and timely one. *The Fair American* means freedom and security for the refugee child. Children 10 to 12 should not miss this trilogy of distinguished stories, nor the charming poems that accompany them.

**THEE, HANNAH!** By Marguerite DeAngeli. New York: Doubleday Doran and Company, 1940. Unpaged. \$2.00.

Certainly no one can make a prettier book than Marguerite DeAngeli and *Thee, Hannah!* is quite the most attractive of all her books. This is also Mrs. DeAngeli's best story.

Hannah is a young Quaker with incurably worldly ideas. She yearns for beflowered bonnets, lacey pantalettes, curly hair, all the forbidden glories of the fashionable world. What's more she does not stop with yearnings, she does her

best to achieve them and her sins pile up to the point where her distracted mother says, not merely, "Oh, Thee, Hannah!" but "Oh, Thee, little *you*, thee!" Then, just as Hannah seems doomed to hopeless rebellion against her Quaker lot she is suddenly instrumental in saving the life of an escaping Negro slave and her little boy. When Hannah learns that she was called on because of her Quaker bonnet, she knows at last the reason for that plain bonnet and she knows she will cherish it always. "Thee, dear Hannah!" said Mother." For children 7 to 10.

**THE LONG WINTER.** By Laura Ingalls Wilder. Illustrated by Helen Sewell and Mildred Boyle. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1940. Pp. 325. \$2.00.

If there were a Distinguished Service Award for interpreting the American pioneer home to American children in stories they love from the first page to the last, read and reread, that Award should go to Laura Ingalls Wilder. From *Little House In the Big Woods* to this latest, and perhaps finest of the series, we wish these six books could be a part of the literary experience of every American child.

In each book, the pioneer family is in the process of establishing a new home farther west. In each book there are dangers, privations, warm human relations, fun and courage. The home is the center of it all, especially of the fun, courage and faith. Laura is the adventurer, Pa is the never-to-be-downed hero, Ma is the steady, loving heart of the home whether in a sod house, a covered wagon, or a claim shanty.

Today when lights turn on, heat comes miraculously from some remote place, food is even farther from its sources, no child should fail to read *The Long Winter*. This reviewer felt colder and colder as she read, so completely does the battle against ever-present, terrifying cold dominate the tale. The endless twisting of straw into sticks when the wood gives out; the button lamp to save oil; the continuous sound of the little hand mill grinding the wheat, their last stand against starvation—these make up one of the grimmest, most convincing battles with cold and hunger to be read. Almanzo Wilder appears in this book and it is he, not Pa, who makes the heroic and terrible trip across the prairie in the faint hope of getting more wheat for the starving community. The conclusion of the book is happy and humorous. Again the Ingalls family has survived triumphantly.

This is a gripping story that children 8 to 12 should read or have read to them.

# Among...

## THE MAGAZINES

Editor, ELIZABETH NETERER

**CREATING CONDUCT DRIVES.** By Harold Saxe Tuttle. *The Journal of the National Education Association of the United States*, March 1941, 30:71-72.

It requires an entirely different learning from knowledge of the right thing to do to impel one to act rightly. What one does depends upon how one feels about doing it.

After explaining that knowledge is acquired by sense impressions while motives are created by an association of feelings, Mr. Tuttle shows how teachers can develop in children dynamic attitudes by associating a specific behavior with some other pleasurable experience.

**TEACHING DEMOCRACY IN THE PRESENT CRISIS.** By William Heard Kilpatrick. *Frontiers of Democracy*, February 15, 1941, 7:134-135.

In the present crisis many people are demanding that the schools teach democracy as effectively as totalitarian schools presumably teach their philosophies of government.

In this editorial, Dr. Kilpatrick shows that no indoctrinating scheme can possibly teach democracy, that youth can learn it only as they learn how to think and act, not selfishly, but for the common good.

**EDUCATION FOR TODAY AND TOMORROW: IMPACT OF THE WORLD CRISIS.** By Howard Yale McClusky, Reinhold Shairer and Irwin Edman. *Child Study*, Winter 1940-1941, 18:45-47.

This article highlights a panel discussion held at the November 1940 institute of the Child Study Association.

All three speakers emphasized the need for utilizing the resources of youth and of giving them their share of significant partnership in the common economic life of the country.

Although the war has undermined the faith of many people in human nature, in the scientific method, and in democracy, Mr. Edman feels that there is still abundant evidence that these values are persisting.

**EDUCATIONAL MOTION PICTURES EVALUATED BY CHILDREN.** By Florence E. Taylor. *Education*, February 1941, 61:364-368.

A discussion by fifth grade children and teacher on the value of films as a learning agency is given in stenographic report.

Miss Taylor considers an evaluation by children an essential part of using motion pictures in school, since it makes the teacher sensitive to the value of pictures from the children's point of view and makes the children increasingly aware that films can and do help in school work.

**CLASSROOM SUITES UNIFY ACTIVITIES.** By Amanda Hebel. *The Nation's Schools*, March 1941, 28-31.

Children and teachers helped plan and design the elementary school recently erected on the campus of Eastern Washington College of Education, Ellensburg.

Miss Hebel describes such carefully thought-out features as suites of rooms arranged so they can function separately, yet are significant parts of the building. Other features are a spray of luke-warm water in the lavatories to facilitate washing hands, and photo-electric cells to regulate artificial light.

A building plan is included.

**LANGUAGE AS SOCIAL ADAPTATION.** By William E. Young. *The Elementary English Review*, February 1941, 18:63-68.

Organs and muscles of chest, throat and mouth, used once for snarling and biting, have, through a process of socialization, become organs and muscles of speech. Different social situations are constantly modifying this speech.

Mr. Young emphasizes language as social adaptation and throws out implications for educators in teaching children to speak and write in order to live more effectively and happily with others.



# Research...

## ABSTRACTS

Editor, JOHN A. HOCKETT

**THE PREVENTION OF FAILURE IN FIRST GRADE READING.** By Howard T. Dunklin. New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, *Contributions to Education*, No. 802, 1940, Pp. iii + 111.

A controlled experiment was carried on to determine the effectiveness of a "program of adjustment" in beginning reading. Experimental groups were formed in three Buffalo, New York, schools, with matched control pupils distributed among other first-grade classes. The basis of selection was a specially constructed learning test, administered during the tenth week of school. Both the experimental and control pupils were selected from those who made the poorest showing on this test.

The practicality of the adjustment program was safeguarded by meeting the following standards: (1) Regular teachers were used. (2) Regular reading books were supplemented by published or specially prepared materials, not exceeding in cost the ordinary allotment for supplementary materials. (3) The program was carried out in classes of average size. (4) Only the usual amount of time devoted to reading by pupils and teachers was available.

The character of the adjusted program is indicated by ten criteria which were set up: (1) The teaching involved an understanding of individual problems. (2) The instruction was directed toward definite objectives. (3) Each child's status with regard to the objectives was known at the beginning, and (4) was continuously known throughout the experiment. (5) Provision was made for individual handicaps and limitations. (6) Teaching was adjusted to the child's ability. (7) Sufficient experience in reading to insure success was provided at each step. (8) Specific reading experiences were provided to meet individual needs. (9) Care was taken to enlist each child's interest and effort. (10) Daily success was provided.

After seven months of instruction, a battery of tests was administered. On the three types of the Gates Primary Reading Test, the experimental group averaged a reading grade of 2.07,

while the control group averaged 1.65. Eleven per cent of the experimental group and 55 per cent of the control group failed to reach a grade score of 1.75.

The author concludes that failures in beginning reading can be very largely prevented by a program of adjusted instruction which is both possible and practicable in a city school system. His evidence indicates that teachers can discover inadequate reading techniques in the early stages and through the use of suitable methods and materials can substitute effective techniques.

**MEASURING PRIMARY-GRADE CHILDREN'S UNDERSTANDING OF HOME AND FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS.** By Roy J. Wasson. *Elementary School Journal*, October 1940, 41:108-117.

An individual-interview technique was used to discover the understandings that primary-grade children have of certain home and family relationships. The subjects were 183 children, evenly distributed among the kindergarten, first, and second grades. They were selected from ten schools in Colorado Springs, representing all social and economic environments in that community. Forty-nine questions were grouped under ten topics related to such factors as "mother" and "baby." Fifteen problem-type questions were also included.

The experimenter did not find that the older children possessed a significantly larger number of ideas than the younger ones. He also found that children below average in background and ability were as much aware of certain aspects of family relations as more fortunate groups. The former, however, had less facility in expressing their ideas and more difficulty in understanding long questions.

The questions were of three types. The first type asked for a report of an observation or experience such as "What does Mother do for you?" The second group confronted the child with a problem situation; for example, "If someone came to see your mother and she had gone to the store, what would you do?" The third group of questions required the giving of

reasons for a certain answer, such as the following: "Do you like to play with your brothers and sisters?" "Why?" The problem-type questions asking for probable conduct in a given situation brought the most complete responses. Questions requiring information derived from experience or observation elicited the next best responses, while the questions requiring reasoning were answered least adequately. The author reaches the conclusion that the considerable understanding of home and family relationships shown by even the kindergarten children would justify making this topic a part of the kindergarten course of study.

#### CHILDREN'S CHOICES IN SCIENCE

BOOKS. By Alice Marietta Williams. New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, *Child Development Monographs* No. 27, 1939. 163 pp.

Three methods were employed in studying children's reactions to books in the field of science: (1) A record was made of the circulation of science books in nine children's libraries; (2) ninety-six pupils in the fifth and sixth grades were observed in small groups over a period of nine weeks as they chose and read from a selected group of thirty-five science books; and (3) each of the ninety-six children was given an interview in which effort was made to discover the characteristics of the books that appealed to him.

The study of library circulation showed that factual books circulated more frequently than narratives, that books in which illustrations are an integral part of the book are more popular than those having purely decorative illustrations, and that books in the fields of aviation, astronomy, physics, and chemistry circulate more widely than books in other fields of

science. The author reports a high degree of consistency between the overt reactions of children and their responses in the interviews. Among her conclusions are the following: Very few children finish reading a book to which they are indifferent. Most of the children could state easily and concisely what they liked in a particular book but were less articulate in giving reasons for disliking a book. They preferred books in which the material is presented in a direct manner rather than as an essay. They were annoyed by the author's digressions and preferred factual material to narrative. They either ignored personification in a book or were annoyed by it. They liked information which they had not had before, animals and machines which they had never seen, and different ways of doing things. They enjoyed humor, including old-fashioned cars and clothing, grotesque animals, suggestions of absurd procedures, play on words, and descriptions of unusual inconveniences such as to get out and get under a car.

Nearly all of the children read some books which were below their reading level in difficulty and some tried to read books which were too difficult. These were handicapped by difficult concepts as well as by vocabulary difficulties. Books giving the habits and activities of animals were popular as well as those telling how things work and giving the development of modern conveniences from simple early forms. Most of the boys liked books on aviation and electricity but girls generally lacked the background necessary to enjoy these. The pupils liked meaningful illustrations and pored over charts, diagrams, sketches, and photographs. Books that are generally unpopular were eagerly sought and read by children especially interested in a particular subject.

## Spilling

When Earth goes turning over,  
I should not mind at all  
If half a little river  
Should tip itself and fall;

Or half a little ocean  
Or half a little sea.  
I'd rather Earth would spill them all  
Than to spill *me*.

—Kathryn Worth (*Story Parade*)

# News . . .

## HERE AND THERE

By MARY E. LEEPER

### New A. C. E. Branches

Shelby County Association for Childhood Education, Alabama

John Muir Association for Childhood Education, Contra Costa County, California

Daytona Beach Association for Childhood Education, Florida

Bemidji Student Association for Childhood Education, Minnesota

Lincoln University Association for Childhood Education, Jefferson City, Missouri

Tulsa County Association for Childhood Education, Oklahoma

Hood River Association for Childhood Education, Oregon

Carter County Association for Childhood Education, Tennessee

Copper Basin Association for Childhood Education, Tennessee

Cumberland County Association for Childhood Education, Tennessee

Corpus Christi Association for Childhood Education, Texas

Grays Harbor Association for Childhood Education, Washington

River Falls State Teachers College Association for Childhood Education, Wisconsin

University of Puerto Rico Association for Childhood Education, Rio Piedras

The Denver Kindergarten-Primary Club announces that it is now the Denver Association for Childhood Education.

The Chicago Central Council of Childhood Education recently became the Association for Childhood Education of the Chicago Area.

### Changes

Dorothea Jackson, from assistant director of kindergarten and primary education, Public Schools, Seattle, Washington, to kindergarten-primary supervisor, State Department of Education, Olympia, Washington.

### Spring Conference

The Michigan Association for Childhood Education will hold its annual spring conference in Bay City, Saturday, April 19, with the theme, "Building Better Citizens." At the morning session a panel discussion led by John Emons, Wayne University, Detroit, will consider ways in which the schools can help in building better citizens. This will be followed by visiting of schools and exhibits.

L. L. Jarvie, American Council on Education,

will address the group at an afternoon session and Mary E. Leeper, executive secretary, will bring greetings from the national Association.

### Students Hold Meeting

Thirty-seven representatives of four student A. C. E. groups in Illinois met in Chicago on January 11 to discuss "Festivals for Young Children." At a luncheon session Olga Adams, president of the national Association, told of plans for the A. C. E. conference in California in July. The possibility of student representatives driving to Oakland for the conference was discussed.

### Songs for Young Children

From the Pittsburgh Kindergarten Association, an A. C. E. Branch, comes *Singing Is Fun*, a 46-page book of songs composed by children and kindergarten teachers. The foreword, which dedicates the book to Ella Ruth Boyce, director of kindergartens in the Pittsburgh Public Schools, states:

The music is genuinely the work of children and their teachers. Moreover, it does not represent any special or sporadic effort. The improvisation of songs in the kindergartens of Pittsburgh is an integral part of the normal program and goes on day after day and year after year as a matter of course.

The book may be purchased through Miss Boyce at the Administration Building, Bellefield Avenue at Forbes, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Price 85c.

### Council Changes Name

The National Council for Mothers and Babies, of which the Association for Childhood Education is a member, is now the National Maternal and Child Health Council. In announcing the change, *Clearing House Notes*, a leaflet distributed by the Council, says:

In the name of "Mothers and Babies" we have worked steadily to deepen channels of cooperation, interpret approaches to health needs, and accelerate action to meet the visible gaps. But constantly we have bucked the mental hazard of a name called "undescriptive" by the circumspect, "sentimental" by the more forthright.

As the "National Maternal and Child Health Council" we maintain our focus on the problems centered

around childbearing, but recognize the breadth of that field. Too, we emphasize that our interest is health, not pink ribbons!

### ***For Equal Opportunities***

Adverse weather conditions proved no deterrent to attendants at a meeting in Rice Lake, Wisconsin, on January 25. Two hundred teachers and administrators came together to consider equal opportunities for all the children. "The Kindergarten—Its Functions, Problems, Materials, and Procedures," "Reading Readiness," and "Reports to Parents in the Primary Grades," were topics of the day. Current professional books, magazines, testing materials and bulletins were exhibited.

The conference, sponsored by J. H. Murphy, superintendent of the Rice Lake Public Schools, took the place of the regular western sectional meeting of the Wisconsin Conference of Supervisors. Maybell G. Bush represented the State Department of Public Instruction.

### ***War and the Children***

In the February 17 issue of *Time* magazine appears a report of a study by Edna Dean Baker, president of the National College of Education, Evanston, Illinois, on children's reactions to talk of World War II. Four- and five-year-olds insisted upon war games, six- and eight-year-olds proved highly emotional in their conversation, nine- to fourteen-year-olds were unemotional and surprisingly well informed. Miss Baker's advice to parents may well be noted by teachers:

Children under six: Reassure them frequently that Hitler will not get them; avoid talking about war in their presence; keep them busy with pleasant things.

Six to eight: Discuss the war freely, but avoid talking about destruction, brutality, suffering, or war guilt; take their minds off war by playing family games, singing old songs, keeping home fires burning brightly.

Nine to fourteen: Let them listen to the radio; play up stories of gallantry and cheerfulness among war-stricken peoples; discuss with them the background of war, the peace-to-come.

### ***From England***

Clare Soper, secretary of the New Education Fellowship which has its headquarters in London, writes:

Our January conference at Oxford was an amazing success. Members came from all over England and went away refreshed and heartened. Most of the discussions turned on the need for a "planned society" and in April we shall meet again to go into detail

as to the educational preparation needed for such planning.

Miss Soper sends an informal report of the conference by a member of the Fellowship:

My impression of the discussions was that the whole purpose of change in the social order and education was to produce change in individuals. We become what we are very largely through the influences that are brought to bear upon us. Institutions, customs, economic and social arrangements, content and methods of education are among the most important of these influences; we are influenced more profoundly by what is done than by what is said. Our existing institutions embody and express a whole set of false values—self-assertive, exclusive, materialistic. We absorb them as we grow up, because these are the values that are really put into practice in the institutions around us. Change our institutions—first in one sphere, then in another—so that we get new institutions which express better values, and people will grow up absorbing these values.

If our economic system is based on competition and individual acquisitiveness, people will naturally take it that the aim of life is to "get on" at the expense of others. If our schools are run on authoritarian plan and children are stimulated by a system of rewards and punishments to "beat" one another, they will grow up supposing that life is a fight to do others down and that the desirable goal is a position from which you can boss others. To tell them of the beauties of another way of life based on cooperation will only convert a few. Most people will believe what they see going on around them. Everything will pull against their making a spiritual change.

The present moment is extremely critical because we are quite certainly in for great changes in the economic and social order. Because of the vast size of modern societies and the highly developed state of technical science, the economic and social order has to be planned. Even more important than the economic techniques are the social techniques; communication, military science and the new arts of influencing human behavior make it easy to plan and control. The major decisions are inevitably taken from a few key positions. Planning is therefore unavoidable.

In the totalitarian countries planning has been carried out to produce conformity and regimentation. But this is not the only possible way of planning. Our job is to plan for freedom and variety and justice—to introduce forms of coordination which express what are really spiritual values. If we miss our chance of doing this we shall find ourselves in a planned society of the dictatorship pattern. If we succeed we shall have achieved the opportunity of creating a civilization better than anything the world has ever known. We shall have produced a framework within which it is easier and more natural for individuals to live out the values that belong to a spiritual existence.

### ***Progressive Education Association***

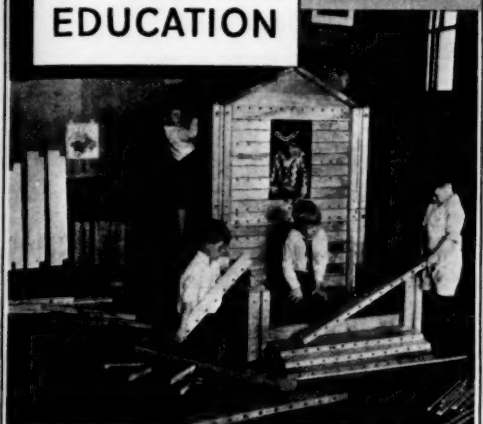
At the annual national conference of the Progressive Education Association in Philadelphia, February 19-22, "A Program for Democratic Education" was discussed at general sessions and in discussion groups.

(Continued on page 388)



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**\*RETURNING** ... leave **Oakland** Sunday morning, July 13. Spend Monday in picturesque **Salt Lake City** with a complete auto tour of the city, a visit to the Museum and a noon-day organ recital in the famous tabernacle. Then on to **Colorado Springs** with marvelous sightseeing trips to **Pikes Peak**, **Garden of the Gods** and **Cave of the Winds**. Next, to **Denver** and a tour of the mile-high city. Arrive back in **Nashville** Friday morning, July 18; in **St. Louis** or **Chicago** Thursday evening, July 17.

\* Above itinerary covers Tour "A". More extensive Tour "B" includes the Pacific Northwest and the Canadian Rockies on return trip.

### COST OF TOUR

	St. Louis	Chicago	Nashville
In Chair Cars	\$114.20	\$117.60	\$123.10
In Tourist Pullmans			
Two in lower (each)	137.25	142.05	146.40
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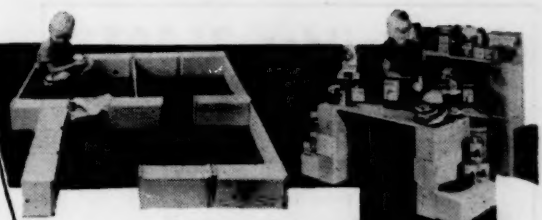
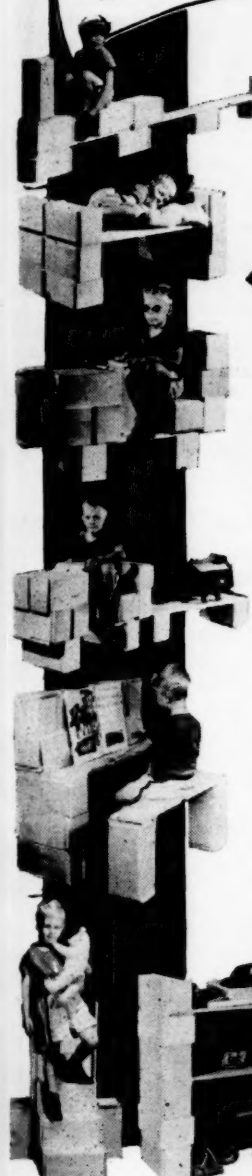
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(Continued from page 384)

On Thursday morning, in a series of seven groups, practices in American schools that point the way to the future of education were presented. Frances Mayfarth, editor of *CHILDHOOD EDUCATION*, planned and presided over the section on early childhood education. Following an overview of this field of education were stories of work with children in a mountain nursery school; descriptions of life in an elementary school where democratic living is an established practice; consideration of the transition stage from early to middle childhood; presentation of research material on children's reaction to the movies, comics, and radio; and an interpretation by a superintendent of his own philosophy of education and how it is put to work in the schools that he directs. The entire program had to do with "What makes life good for children?" and society's responsibility for seeing that the environment and the guidance given children contribute to their wholesome development.

### National Council of Childhood Education

Morning and afternoon sessions of the Council were held on February 25 during the meeting of the American Association of School Administrators in Atlantic City. In the program, planned by the presidents of the National Association for Nursery Education and the Association for Childhood Education, forty-five organizations and agencies participated in one or more of the following ways:

Contributed to 1941 "Reports from Organizations Working for Children," an annual review.

Supplied exhibition copies of material closely related to the education and welfare of children, published during the past year.

Sent representatives to participate in the meeting.

At the morning session Lawrence K. Frank spoke on "Conserving Human Resources in the Field of Early Childhood Education." In emphasizing the need for working together he said:

Those dealing with young children have more opportunity to collaborate with the family on one side and with the many specialized professions whose knowledge and skills are needed in a comprehensive program of conservation, on the other. If a comprehensive program is to be developed for early childhood there should be enlisted the pediatricians, the psychiatrists, dentists, public health administrators, nutritionists, psychologists, social workers, librarians, and all the other specialists in child care and treatment and adult education to see if their knowledge and specialized skills can be orchestrated in the common theme of conservation of early childhood. Every agency that touches the family and the child should be scrutinized to see how it can be integrated into this large program and especially to reveal where and how, often unconsciously, it is creating difficulties for others or blocking their efforts.

Some of you may be appalled by the prospect of such a comprehensive, all-embracing proposal, but it may be urged that unless and until there is a broad, comprehensive program of conservation of early childhood the educational program will continue to be blocked by children coming with all the handicaps, defects, distortions, and inadequacies they now exhibit so frequently.

At the afternoon session William H. Bristow presided over an experimental Community Council that considered the needs of children in "Anytown." Representatives of eighteen national agencies were members of the council. Dr. Bristow summed up the discussion with these words:

Here are some of the things we have said together: One of the best ways to begin to know your community is to get people together.

We get understanding of the community by discussing our common problems.

In community work it is important that we do things *with* people rather than *for* them.

A council should not become too much tangled up in the *machinery* of organization.

In considering the problems to attack we should start work on simple ones in which we can be successful.

The "Reports from Organizations Working for Children" (price 15c), and Lawrence K. Frank's address (price 15c), may be secured from the Association for Childhood Education, 1201 Sixteenth St., N. W., Washington, D. C.